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Higher Education Chaplaincy and the Changing Role of Religion in the Public Square a contextual theology for university chaplaincy

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Higher Education Chaplaincy and the Changing Role of Religion in the Public Square

– a contextual theology for university chaplaincy

Rev. Stan Brown

Thesis submitted to King's College London for the degree of DMin

Higher Education Chaplaincy and the Changing Role of Religion in the Public Square

– a contextual theology for university chaplaincy

Abstract

University chaplaincy has received little attention in discussions of the role of religion within the secular university. Theologians have primarily considered chaplaincy as a generic form of ministry rather than constructing accounts based in the different chaplaincy contexts. By contrast this thesis aims to construct a contextual theology for chaplaincy based in an understanding of the role of religion in the public square of the secular university. Using a discourse analysis of recent policy documents and reports from government, the Higher Education Sector and the Churches I seek to uncover their underlying understandings of the role of religion in secular Higher Education. This analysis reveals that although there is little mention of chaplaincy outside the Church documents the secular university is a complex fusion of secular, multi-faith and Christian themes with religion in the university increasingly understood through thin accounts concerned with managerial processes. The thesis then examines the history of chaplaincy in the British university looking for a coherent theological narrative for the development of this context. This history shows how the growth of university chaplaincy has been shaped by increasingly diverse forms of society. Using the historical narrative and contemporary analysis I then build a typology for contemporary chaplaincy responses. In the final chapter I offer a theology for university chaplaincy based in an understanding of the essentially diverse nature of secularity, on the dialogical accounts of the university offered by Ford and Higton and an understanding of Christian responses to otherness through hospitality drawn from the work of Barnes and Bretherton. The thesis argues for the importance of the Higher Education chaplaincy for the university, the Churches and for academic theology, concluding with recommendations about the training and support of chaplains.

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Introduction

One Question

The last fifteen years have been a time of rapid change if not turbulence for the Higher Education sector. Government departments have been reformed and their ministers have come and gone but the cumulative effect of policy towards Higher Education has been a seismic shift in its extent, funding, and purposes. For most of this time I have been first an ecumenical University Chaplain and then latterly Education Chaplaincy Officer for the Methodist Church. This has meant not just accompanying the university through its challenges but also being a participant in equally dramatic changes in the extent, funding and purpose of chaplaincy. Faced with increasing diversity in the university most chaplaincies have moved rapidly from single faith to multi-faith models, they have found their purpose, nature and continuance questioned not just by the secular university but also within the Church itself.

This thesis is written in the belief that chaplaincy in Higher Education (HE)¹ has never been more relevant for either the sending communities or for the receiving institutions. The central question which has preoccupied me has been what it means for the Church to be present as a faithful witness to its Lord within the secular Higher Education Institution (HEI).² The question is relevant to the HEI not only because of the new importance of religious diversity but also in the profound issues it raises about the nature and purpose of Higher Education. For the Christian community this question ought to be equally vital. The university chaplaincy faithfully seeking and responding to its mission within the diverse and questioning environment of the secular HEI offers a potential model for ways of being Church in the post-Christendom world.

¹ I have used both the “Higher Education” and the abbreviation HE – the difference is merely stylistic.

² Although not all HEIs are technically universities the difference is not significant for my purposes and the terms are used interchangeably.

Two Theologies

Commenting on their collection of reflective pieces written by chaplains from a number of different disciplines Threfall-Holmes and Newitt speak of the “incarnational or sacramental model” of chaplaincy (Threfall-Holmes and Newitt 2011:120) which is offered by many of their contributors. Chaplaincy is seen as a form of sacramental presence in the institution through the ministry of the Church. This theme of chaplaincy as a ministry of presence described in incarnational or sacramental language is a recurring one in the literature of chaplaincy (Ware 1999: 64-65, Wright 1999: 97, Legood 1999: 136, Woodward 1999: 165, De Lang 2011:16, Jenkins 2006: 7). The theology of chaplaincy which is currently available in the main text books for HE chaplains is typically framed as a theology of ministry and seeks to locate chaplaincy within the wider ministries of the Church rather than its own contexts (Avis 1999: 3). I want to argue, however, that emphasising chaplaincy as an ecclesial or sacramental presence through forms of ministry limits its real impact, and undervalues its role as mission. To understand the nature of chaplaincy in the challenging environment of the secular HEI we need to move from an incarnational and sacramental theology of presence towards a contextual theology of mission.

There are of course exceptions to the incarnation-sacramental-presence approach in the available literature. Dan Hardy’s 1991 lecture to HE chaplains seeks to find a theology of chaplaincy within a discussion of the public nature of theology and the relationship of both church and university to society as a whole (Hardy 1996: 206-216). Timothy Jenkins’ discussion of HE chaplaincy as an “experiment in providence” reflects a deep concern with how chaplaincy can be shaped by an active attention to the nature and task of the university (Jenkins 2006), whilst Robinson and Binwell (2000) offer a revised model for a chaplaincy mission based on their analysis of the fragmented post-modern university. I am not suggesting that approaches to chaplaincy from the theology of ministry are in any way flawed - indeed they are an essential part of our understanding of chaplaincy - but they should be

seen as one of the two routes into a theology of chaplaincy. I will be taking the road less travelled - that of working from the theology of the context to that of the mission which takes place there.

An approach to chaplaincy through the theology of its context rather than the theology of ministry also has an effect on a second theme which Threfall-Holmes and Newitt (2011) identify as recurrent in the chaplaincy literature - the chaplain's experience of marginality. This theme is a common one though expressed in many different ways. Whilst Church reports might focus on the dangers of the marginalisation of the chaplain from the life of the congregation (McGrail and Sullivan 2007, Archbishops' Council 2002), Christopher Moody (1999) uses the metaphor of St. John's cave – half way up the mountain in Patmos, between the monastery at the top and the bustle of the town below, and then describes the chaplain as "amphibious". Shockley (1989) also begins his discussion of duality with a spatial metaphor reworking Tertullian's famous dictum to describe the chaplain, "living between Athens and Jerusalem", but then helpfully adapts this image to locate the chaplain in the multi-cultural melting pot and new town of the ancient world – the City of Corinth. Introducing a special chaplaincy edition of the Methodist Journal *Epworth Review*, Jones (2010) uses the motif of St. Martin giving half his cloak or *capella* to a beggar to describe the duality of the chaplain's role, noting that linguistically, theologically and historically the chaplain is prior to the chapel. Lochrie speaks of the chaplain as ever in danger of marginalisation – "in but not of the university" (Lochrie 1986: 12). The titles given to publications on HE chaplaincy are similarly expressive of ambiguity and marginalisation: *Dancing on the Edge* (McGrail, P. and Sullivan, J., 2007), *Higher Education Chaplaincy – Vocation or Vacation?* (Jones 2005), *Abnormal Ministry? Charlie Chaplaincy?* (King 1997), *Campus Ministry – The Church Beyond Itself* (Shockley 1989). The dual nature of the chaplain is seen as somehow distinctive and defining of the particular challenges of this ministry. This duality is almost always presented as problematic, requiring a theology of chaplaincy which in part exists in order to provide an apologetic to the church for the ministry it describes.

When the theology of chaplaincy is approached through the context for chaplaincy the ambiguities are just as apparent, but the duality, complexity and insecurity no longer appear to be strange, surprising or even distinctive. The ambiguities of the secular HEI apply to all and from this point of view the issues seem to arise more from the contradictions inherent in our contemporary institutions and particular form of secularity. It should not come as a surprise for Christians to find themselves citizens of two kingdoms. This vocation is the calling of the Church in the world rather than a particular burden laid on chaplains. To some extent chaplaincy in the secular HEI can stand as a model for the position of the Church within a secularised society. To fully develop this theme is beyond the scope of this thesis – but it is one to which I shall return briefly in my conclusions.

There are of course many approaches to contextual theology. Stephen Bevans (2002) argues that Christianity must “...continue God’s incarnation in Jesus by becoming contextual” (Bevans 2002: 12). Bevans goes on to identify a continuum of contextual theologies ranging from a countercultural model in which the gospel story is used to interpret, critique and challenge contexts through to an anthropological model in which it is presumed that a given context and culture already contains the gospel enabling theology to be practised through attentiveness to the situation. These models are not mutually exclusive, though for Bevans they will each be more relevant to some situations than others, with highly secularised societies requiring models which engage critically with culture (Bevans 2002: 140). The methodology I have adopted is perhaps closest to what Bevans describes as the countercultural model in which the context is taken seriously as one in and through which the gospel can be communicated. The context must, however, be analysed to reveal its theological import and is always subject to the critique of the gospel. The purpose is not to replace the existing cultural context, but rather to reveal the penultimate status of any context in the light of the gospel (Bevans 2002: 118-120). My analysis of the context and culture of the secular university looks for the implicit and explicit understandings of faith which are found there and are shaping university chaplaincy today. My argument based on this analysis will be that chaplaincy is a

missional presence in the secular university operating mainly through a process of negotiations with the secular and multi-faith context in which it is set. Given the penultimate state of all contexts, the task of chaplaincy is not to “convert” the secular university but to seek to call it towards a fuller understanding of God’s purpose for the secular age.

Three Absences

Higher Education chaplaincy seems to be the ambiguous presence of the faith communities in the ambiguously secular university – a presence and an absence at one and the same time. This study seeks to address three of those absences. First I will examine the presence and absence of chaplaincy as a form of religious life in the university through the literature of government, HE sector and the Faith Communities in their reports and policy documents concerning religion in the university. This literature seems to increasingly follow the pattern found in the Caldicott Enquiry report (2010) to UCL in which faith within the university is seen as a series of religious phenomena to be measured and managed with little or no reference to the self-understanding of the faith traditions. The meaning and value of university chaplaincies as a formal presence of faith communities in the HEI is largely absent in this literature other than as a tool for managing a potentially volatile religious diversity. A close reading of these documents, however, reveals that our secularity is far more theologically grounded than might initially appear, and that the present form of university chaplaincy is largely the result of a developing secular diversity.

The second absence of university chaplaincy is the most surprising. Chaplaincy in Higher Education seems strangely absent from itself. HE chaplaincy in Britain lacks a written history, has produced remarkably little published theology, failed to establish a professional

association at the beginning of the twenty first century,³ and has no practice journal. An absence is infamously more difficult to establish than a presence, and I must immediately qualify the claim I have just made by pointing to an oral tradition of HE chaplaincy which is carried forward by regular conferencing – most significantly at the biennial Churches Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG) Convention but also now in European and International meetings. This absence of self-understanding in HE chaplaincy will be addressed through a short history in which a coherent narrative for the development of chaplaincy is constructed. This narrative is framed by the development of secularity as a response to increasing diversity in society and the evidence suggests that what we call secularism today has been and continues to be significantly influenced by theological concepts. The brief historical excursus is in fact closely linked to the analysis of recent policy. Both serve to build a contextual theological understanding of chaplaincy.

Tracing the history of university chaplaincy allows us to see how its various forms have been a remarkably accurate barometer of the changing weather of secularity. In relating the development of university chaplaincies to the development of the secular university, the history provides a much needed coherent narrative for HE chaplaincy today. This narrative is then used to map the present forms of HE chaplaincy against differing kinds of university and a spectrum of understandings of secularity. The resulting picture is very different from the modelling of chaplaincy in the existing literature, which is based on either traditional or contemporary models of ministry and can be found in the work of Jones (2005), Robinson (2004), Robinson and Baker (2005), Threlfall-Holmes (2011), Shockley (1989), and the church reports analysed in Chapters 1 and 2. The conventional typology of chaplaincy is based on the theology of ministry and to some extent mission. The one offered here grows out of the differing contexts found within HE today, and is therefore consistent with the overall perspective of this thesis in approaching the task through the context.

³ The multi-faith Higher Education Chaplaincies Association (HECA) did not gather momentum and was wound up after barely three years of existence.

An extensive literature exists on the theology of the university and the work of David Ford (2007), Gavin D’Costa (2005) and Stanley Hauerwas (2007) will receive particular attention in the final section of this study. These authors have focused primarily on the place of theology as a discipline in the academy today, a significant and very proper discussion for a university theologian. Yet in its concern to establish theology as a Christian presence within the academy, this material rarely, if at all, recognises the place of chaplaincy as a faithful presence and witness to Christianity within the HEI. Nor have theologians wrestling to relate the distinctive Christian forms of thought to the disciplines of the post-Enlightenment university sought to uncover how chaplaincies might actually also be engaged with the core business of the university in knowledge and formation. Even those who are imagining a renewed Christian university such as D’Costa (2004, 2005), Walker and Wright (2004) and MacIntyre (2007), do not offer a discussion of chaplaincy as integral to this vision. Highton (2012) does, however, give a very brief consideration of chaplaincy in his theology of the university, whilst Ford (2011) has recently offered a brief “Manifesto” for chaplaincy in the multi-faith context.

The third absence of chaplaincy is therefore from the theological reflection on Higher Education – the significance of chaplaincies as a form of theological presence has simply not been adequately considered. Less than a third of our universities offer an academic focus on Theology or Religious Studies, yet virtually all of them have some sort of recognised chaplaincy.⁴ David Ford’s work on Christian wisdom (2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2011) will prove to be particularly useful in building a theology for HE chaplaincy as part of a wider theology of Higher Education and the university. If we want to consider how Christian faith and Christian wisdom are publicly present in the secular HEI we need to give an account of chaplaincies and the activity of faithful students and staff as well as of academic departments. The third chapter of this study therefore seeks to build on the theology of the university – exploring

⁴The Guardian University Guide for 2012 covers 119 institutions of which 36 (31%) are given subject listings for Religious Studies or Theology. For statistics on the presence of Chaplaincy see Clines (2008).

themes of secularity, otherness, wisdom and hospitality to outline a theology for university chaplaincy.

It is in order to address these three absences that I have chosen to begin with a study of secular Higher Education through a discourse analysis of government and sector statements on religion in HE. There is a growing body of official and semi-official material relating to religion in HE in the form of reports, policy statements and practice documents which are being produced by government departments (BIS), representative bodies (UUK, NUS) and advisory bodies (ECU). These sources are treated as primary documents and they will be listed and analysed in full in the relevant chapter rather than summarised here. Such reports and policies, however, appear to grow out of three agendas. Firstly, the widespread concern over radicalisation and violent extremism in the name of religion on campus has led to an agenda of securitising religious issues in HEIs. The analysis of material in this strand reveals a fascinating dialogue of reports and responses between government and the HE sector. Within this dialogue we are able to see an evolution in the underlying understandings of the nature of faith within the secular public space. Secondly, equality legislation now identifies religion or belief as a protected characteristic creating specific duties for public bodies and employers (including HEIs) towards faith groups and legislation has required a response. Thirdly, a greater emphasis in HEIs on the overall quality of the student experience, a more competitive HE environment and a greater responsiveness to students as customers (all prompted by and relating back to government policy) has produced a number of reports, advice notes and summaries of best practice on the “management” of religion within the sector. These documents have been interrogated to reveal their ideological assumptions.

The security, equality and student experience strands of policy towards religion in the HE sector have all had a significant impact on HE chaplaincies. There is at present no theological analysis of the effects of these policy strands in the university and I hope that this study can at least point to the significance of these policy documents and make a contribution to our

theological understanding of them. Alongside the publications of government and sector documents dealing with religion in HE are set a number of Church reports – both denominational and ecumenical – concerned with the nature of chaplaincy and ministry in Higher Education. A series of major reports have been produced by the Anglican Church over the last generation - *Partners in Understanding* (General Synod 1980), *Going Public* (NSCP 1985) a report published by full time Polytechnic chaplains, *Pillars of the Church* (Archbishops' Council 2002) and the strategy document *Aiming Higher* (Board of Education of the Church of England 2005). In addition a more complex inter-faith survey and study – *Faiths in Higher Education Chaplaincy* (Clines 2008) was commissioned by the Church of England and supported by government funding. The Clines study includes extensive survey material and offers a recent overview of HE chaplaincies. The survey took place nearly ten years on from a major study carried out by sociologist Sophie Gilliat-Ray and published as *Religion in Higher Education – the Politics of the Multi-Faith Campus* (Gilliat-Ray 2000). The two projects were sufficiently similar in methodology and scope to allow changes in HE chaplaincy to be tracked at the opening and close of the period under study. Most of the church based documents referred to here, however, are framed as formal reports, strategy and policy statements. In contrast to this the Roman Catholic report on chaplaincy in Higher Education - *Dancing on the Edge* - was published as a book in which the official church report is bound together with a series of ecumenical essays on HE chaplaincy (McGrail and Sullivan 2007). It is a unique document.

By examining literature from both government/sector and the churches/faith communities, the overt theologies of HE offered by the churches and theologians are brought into conversation with the covert and assumed theologies which will be identified in the government and sector documents.

Several Omissions

The study is interconnected with a number of disciplines and ongoing scholarly conversations each with its own literatures – the theology of chaplaincy, the nature of secularity and the theology of the University/Higher Education. The potential scope is vast and it has been necessary to create some boundaries in order to provide shape and definition.

Firstly, I am primarily concerned with chaplaincy in the *secular* HEI. Insights, concerns and literature which relate specifically to universities which are faith-based foundations (including the distinctive Oxbridge chaplaincies) lie largely outside the scope of the study – though it has been necessary to touch on these as the field remains interconnected. Secondly, the project is limited in time. Although an historical narrative for the development of chaplaincy in the secular HEI is given in Chapter 2, the real study of primary sources begins from 1997 – the year in which the “New Labour” government was elected - and runs to 2011 with the transition to the coalition government. Thirdly, the study is geographically bounded. It will focus on the UK and on England and Wales in particular. The nature of the religious establishment, the differences in educational legislation and the particular place of theology in the Scottish universities with its relationship to ministerial formation are significant differences.

Although there is some literature on university chaplaincy – or more accurately “campus ministry” originating in the USA the wholly different shape of secularity, of the relationships of church and state and the place of the faith based university makes it difficult to bring much of this literature to bear on the UK situation. I will, however, make two exceptions to this limitation. The first will be in referring to Donald Shockley’s (1989) *Campus Ministry, the Church Beyond Itself* which is influential through having featured in many chaplaincy bibliographies and continues to be recommended reading for new HE chaplains in this country. The second exception concerns a theological description of multi-faith chaplaincy as hospitality which comes from Flinders University in Australia (Boyce 2010). Chaplaincy as

hospitality will be one of the main themes of Chapter 3, and so far as I am aware Boyce's short book is the only written account available of the hospitable chaplaincy.

Although this is a study of Higher Education chaplaincy, where developments in Further Education (FE) appear to be revealing trends which will also affect the HE sector this has been taken into account. Chaplaincy in FE is a relatively recent and very fluid development with new chaplaincies still being founded in that sector in a way now rarely happens in the HE Sector with its more established institutions.⁵

Finally, this study is about Christian chaplaincy in HEIs – but Christian chaplaincies in a highly plural context. Much of the policy material studied here is deeply concerned with this plural context. Material from other faith traditions has been included in the study when it has become part of the public dialogue of reports and policies which was taking place.

⁵ An excellent summary of the current state of FE Chaplaincy can be found in the short article which John Breadon (2010) contributed to an *Epworth Review Chaplaincy Special Edition*.

Chapter 1:

Faith in Higher Education: State, Sector and Church 1997-2011

Introduction

The period of the “New Labour” government (1997-2010) was one of considerable development and change in Higher Education. Government policy sought to create a new funding environment into which market forces could be introduced whilst at the same time actively pursuing a policy of widening participation and access to HE. This twin track approach to HE policy was being shaped at the same time that geo-political developments and high levels of migration into the UK brought increased attention to minority groups – especially faith communities – and their relationship to contemporary British society. Widening participation together with wider social changes greatly increased the levels of diversity found in many British HEIs with university managers having to give greater attention to their responses to this diversity. At one and the same time new legislation both guaranteed the rights of faith groups and the individual’s beliefs, whilst security agendas seemed to draw the government towards interventions with faith communities which might risk compromising the very rights it was legislating to protect.

This chapter seeks to understand the conversation which took place around these issues as it can be found in the policy and advice documents which were produced by three main participants – the Churches (and to a lesser extent the faith communities), the government and the HE sector itself. The Churches’ contributions is seen mainly through Church of England reports, the voice of government is heard through its legislation, discussion documents and advisory notes, whilst the sources for HE sector are found in the publications of its representative and advisory bodies.

The documents will be treated in three main sections: a consideration of how Church and government documents have interacted with each other, a more tightly focussed section analysing a conversation between the government and HE sector over violent extremism, and finally a survey of the advisory and managerial documents relating to religion and belief produced within the HE sector during this period.

1) Methodology and Selection of Texts

The aim of the analysis which follows is to lead towards a theological understanding of the current context of chaplaincy in Higher Education. Chaplaincy is a form of mission and ministry in predominantly secular contexts and is significantly shaped by the relationship of faith to these public spaces. Chaplaincy can therefore model distinctive ways of being Church within a predominantly secular context. The primary question put to these documents is to ask how they understand the role of religion in the public square of Higher Education in order to provide the building blocks for a contextual theology of HE chaplaincy.

The majority of the documents to be considered have been produced by or for non-religious organisations. I will argue, however, that these “secular” documents can reveal underlying assumptions about the nature of religion and a major purpose of the analysis will be to identify these assumptions. It may therefore be necessary to employ a number of tools to uncover deeper layers of meaning. The primary methodology will be one of discourse analysis in which the material will be examined for the dynamics of power and interest which they reveal, but I will also use simple content analysis to locate the occurrence and importance of key terminology in the text.

A significant theme within the texts is a concern for security, or at least stability within society and within HE institutions. Policy often appears to be initiated by the perceived threat of what is often described as “violent extremism in the name of religion”. This theme may be

more or less overt in the text, but it is a context which can never be ignored since 9/11 and 7/7. Where this dimension is not overt, the analysis must be capable of uncovering its impact and discerning how the security driven elements interact with the theological ones. Similarly a public document may express at least an aspiration towards neutrality of faith and values in the public square. Such claims are of course value statements in themselves, but may also mask many other presuppositions which need to be examined. What is presented here is a picture of documents which on the surface offer evidence based policy making with managerial responses to the situation, but are in fact indicative of a complex renegotiation of the place of faith within the secular institution.

A major argument of this thesis will be that the public social and institutional spaces in which chaplaincies operate cannot be assumed to be “secular” in its simplest meaning as a space separated from religious influence and are certainly not “neutral”. The situation is one in which a variety of secularisms are in continuous negotiation with the multi-faith and Christian traditions within our society. Chaplaincy is one of the partners in this negotiation and cannot be understood without a proper analysis of this relationship. A positive and theological understanding of the essential diversity of secularity will prove essential to my argument.

The texts themselves represent the material which has been produced during the period 1997-2011 by three parties in the conversation about faith in Higher Education – the faith communities, the HE sector and government. Working with these documents has been part of the task faced by HE chaplaincies and their institutions.

The Church documents selected focus on activity in the Church of England and to a lesser extent the Roman Catholic Church. Not all denominations have the resources or inclination to engage in a conversation with the HE sector and government at this level and to some extent the documents and denominations they represent have been self selecting. Some Church documents – particularly those which formed responses to the government, have proved extremely difficult if not impossible to locate despite generous help with access to archives.

Government sources have been restricted to White Papers and officially issued guidance documents dealing with religion in Higher Education, these have proved a rich field of research.

From the HE sector the documents included represent advice and reporting which has been accepted as forming either sector wide guidance or agreed standards of best practice. This group of documents represents the relevant material sent to HEIs over the period of study from their own representative bodies and advisory groups.

The study is therefore grounded in a selection of texts which has been essential reading for anyone engaged with issues around faiths in HE during the relevant period. Diversity managers, student services professionals, university managers, HE chaplains and government policy makers alike have needed to deal with this documentation.

2) Initial Questions

a) Approximation, Isomorphism and Imposition

One of the effects of formal structural engagement between faith communities and either secular institutions or simply wider society can be that the practice of the faith community becomes reshaped and moulded to fit the culture and expectations of that secular institution. Sophie Gilliat-Ray describes this effect as “approximation” in her study based on HE chaplaincies at the very end of the 1990s (Gilliat-Ray 2000). The chaplain becomes approximated to the institution through remodelling her role towards one already recognised and defined by the institution - as student counsellor or perhaps equalities manager. Gilliat-Ray also argues that faith advisers or chaplains from faith traditions other than Christianity find that the condition of their formal recognition and involvement is accepting a role which

has been shaped and defined by an understanding of recognised religious presence in the institution based on chaplaincy from the Christian tradition.

Bretherton (2010) notes a similar effect when faith communities engage more widely with the state also identifying professionalisation as a characteristic feature of this remodelling which he describes as “isomorphism”. For Bretherton government policy towards faith communities can be a self fulfilling prophecy of the Enlightenment fear of religion as a socially divisive force. Systems of competitive bidding for funding can create divisions and rivalries making it difficult to engage in a truly public discourse about the differences and diversity.

I will argue that there is at least some evidence that a process of approximation is also at work through the multi-faith chaplaincy in which the form of the Christian community’s presence in the university through chaplaincy becomes the basis for the engagement of other faith communities who may not include chaplaincy in their historic traditions. If it is indeed the case that in the current conditions for chaplaincy as a form of presence and engagement has an effect on the language, culture and practice of the HEI this must feed back into our theological model.

b) Theological Models of Engagement

A major purpose of conducting this study is to uncover what theological models of engagement are at work and offer some critical judgement on these. To a large extent then, the modelling has to emerge from the study of the texts themselves but it is useful at this point to at least give a brief survey of some of the territory which I will examine in more detail later.

In the post-Christendom period theological models of engagement with the secular have tended to cluster around three themes:

- 1) Consistent engagement on the basis of the pursuit of the Common Good. A tradition found most clearly in Roman Catholic social teaching but which has impacted on a number of the texts considered here. This model presumes both that secularity is sufficiently coherent for a consistent engagement and that there is a coherence between the goods sought by different ethical traditions.
- 2) A series of ad hoc engagements with a modernity which is presumed to be fractured and lack coherence. The work of Stanley Hauerwas might stand as an example of this approach.
- 3) Separated witness through distinctive Christian activity. Within the theologies of Higher Education Gavin D'Costa (2005) makes an argument for the necessity of the Christian university.

The various Church documents under consideration show a surprising lack of clarity in their theology of Higher Education and HE chaplaincy. This theme will be carried forward into the next chapter which takes the theoretical concepts arising out of the policy study and uses them to look back into the history of HE chaplaincy.

We need to ask what models of engagement between the Church and State are at work within the texts analysed in this study. The drivers for this changing relationship may be in the nature of the secular liberal state itself, but may also lie within the complex pressures generated by the state's response to violent extremism. In the discussion of the development of policy statements concerned with violent extremism on campus it will become clear that the perceived urgency of this situation has indeed had a powerful and distorting effect for government perspectives on religion in HE and chaplaincy responses.

c) Defining the Liberal Settlement

Although this study is focussed on the secular HEI I want to withhold any detailed definition of secularity until the final chapter. This is partly to allow the grounds for this definition to emerge from the contextual study in the first two chapters but partly also so the discussion of secularity will take place within a theological argument about the nature of the university and chaplaincy. Nevertheless some preliminary clarification of the way in which I am using disputed and diverse terms such as “secular” and “liberal” are needed for the purposes of this chapter.

My focus here will be on secular institutions and the secular state in which religion is identified and differentiated from the institution or state. In this procedural form of secularism the state or institution professes to provide a neutral public space within which many different forms of life – including religious ones – are free to prosper. Broadly speaking religion becomes removed from the public to the private sphere. This form of secularity is closely associated with the philosophy of political liberalism which is most clearly articulated by John Rawls (1996, 1999). For Rawls, society is made up of rights bearing and rational individuals who maintain their freedom of belief, expression and action by acting within the public space on the basis of a shared form of rationality or “public reason” which is independent of these more fundamental systems of belief. Where secularism is presented in a form which brings together the theme of religion differentiated from the public space within the themes of political liberalism I shall use the terms “secular liberal” or “liberal secularism”. This kind of procedural secularism has become a dominant theme in the secular HEI. For this reason I shall also at times refer to the “secular liberal settlement”.

Similarly I have chosen to use the terminology of the public “square”, “sphere” or “space” almost interchangeably when distinguishing it from the private. I do so aware that a number of differing definitions of public and private space are available – part of my argument will be

that this distinction has become distorting and unhelpful in offering a theological account for chaplaincy in the secular institution.

These are working definitions which I accept are at this point in need of greater refinement, but I hope that they will prove adequate for the discussion which follows.

3) Surveying the Scene - Gilliat-Ray – Inter-Faith Relations in HE as Politics in the Absence of Theology

Religion in Higher Education – the Politics of the Multi-Faith Campus (Gilliat-Ray 2000) is a major survey of the religious scene in Higher Education at the end of the 1990s. It is therefore logical to make this the first text examined here, not just because it offers us some fairly comprehensive data about the field at the opening of the period in question, but because the study in itself is part of the discourse about religion in Higher Education. Methodologically the study was undertaken within the discipline of sociology of religion and so is not an overtly theological document. The scope of the survey, however, is such that it is necessary to spend some time in considering its findings – there has been no other study of religion in UK Higher Education in this period which has come close in scope to this one. The only comparable document – to which we will return later – is Jeremy Clines' report, *Faiths in Higher Education Chaplaincy* (Clines 2008). Such is the influence of Gilliat-Ray's work that Clines includes a short appendix listing both the similarities and differences between his survey and the earlier one creating a line of intertextuality between the two published studies.

Gilliat-Ray's stated intention is to survey and analyse institutional responses to the changing nature of religion in Higher Education. In pursuing this research aim she discovered that chaplains were by far the most important research participants as they, rather than the institutions they served, were the main holders of information and the most willing research

participants (Gilliat Ray 2000: 8).⁶ Exploring the complex relations between secularity and religious identity in the HE sector, Gilliat-Ray argues that there is a mixed economy in which UK HEIs are never quite wholly secular. She found considerable differentiation between the strands of the HE system. Broadly speaking:

- Collegiate Universities: representing an establishment Christianity
- Civic Universities: based in a secular hegemony and making concessions to religion on their own terms
- New Universities (Post 1992): often more willing to engage with multi-faith society and student groups (Gilliat-Ray 2000: 15)

This mixed economy of religious and secular reflects changes occurring more widely in society through which “Religion on campus is moving out of the strictly private realm” (Gilliat-Ray 2000: 44). This move towards the public square is characterised as a power struggle (hence the “politics” of the title). Religious groups have largely opted for identity politics and linked this to the secular-liberal concern for the rights of the individual. This contested field then becomes one in which minority groups – and especially those whose religious way of life is most resistant to the individualising forces of secularism – make most of the running. For Gilliat-Ray the vexed issue of prayer space on campus (mainly for Muslim students) is the primary example of this identity politics and contestation – in space poor HEIs, the use and allocation of rooms are highly politicised. By expressing their identity through territorial claims student religious groups enter this already established campus politics of institutions (Gilliat-Ray 2000: 122).

One weakness of Gilliat-Ray’s approach – probably a necessary consequence of her work as a sociologist - is that she is never quite sure where to place religious or theological reasoning.

⁶ This situation was to change by the end of the period under consideration with the sector itself commissioning a study of: *Religion and Belief in Higher Education: the Experiences of Staff and Students* (Weller, Hooley and Moore 2011).

The main force of her argument offers an understanding of the processes and changes at work as the eponymous “politics of the multi-faith campus”, yet there are moments when she allows that the distinctive shape and belief of the faith communities are themselves drivers in this process. In the end her recommendations are that a pragmatic and procedural understanding of secularism should prevail in which religious facilities are promoted equally for all faith groups on campus. This means in effect that secularism becomes the new establishment retaining its dominant presence and defining the terms in which faith is publicly present in the HEI. Gilliat-Ray is fully aware that this form of secularism is not neutral but simply the status quo (which characteristically represents itself as neutral). Her recommendations are presented as a pragmatic solution based on the developing model found primarily in the New Universities.

Gilliat-Ray’s view does, however, seem to be based on a concern for equality of opportunities and the need for some kind of moderating influence on the potentially divisive forces of religion in the public realm. In the end then, what her study offers us is a major data resource for the understanding of religion and chaplaincy in HEIs at the turn of the millennium which is based on a variation or development of the classic liberal model. It is all the more interesting in that this study took place just before the terrible events of 2001 and shows us some underlying trends without having to look through the distorting lens of heightened concern about radicalisation and security.

Gilliat-Ray leaves us with questions about the emergence of this (admittedly revised) form of secularism as the new establishment and what form chaplaincy should take as an expression of Christian presence in such an institution. By identifying the less than wholly secular nature of HEIs Gilliat-Ray’s study does suggest that the approximation which takes place between the secular institution and the faith communities is a two way process. Whilst the faith communities in the secular HEI have been affected and shaped by the norms, values and expectations of the secular institutions, the communities in turn have also had an effect on

the very nature of this secularity. These effects are not of course equal or symmetrical but the approximation is indeed a two way process.

Religion in Higher Education helped to shape and influence the later study by Clines (2008) and her recommendations have contributed to the unfolding debate about religion in Higher Education and the work of its chaplaincies. This text is not simply a mixed methods study providing a snapshot of the situation at a particular moment in time but is itself part of a discourse in which the relationship between higher education and religion is being shaped. It reveals, however, a particular weakness within this discourse when it seeks to understand this relationship in isolation from the language of the faith communities themselves. There is little attempt here to find the connections between the self understanding of the faith communities and their engagement with Higher Education (especially the churches present through chaplaincies) and the framework of the study suggests that the relationship can be fully described through a discourse based on identities, power and politics. This makes it impossible for the sociological description to examine why the presence of faith communities in HEIs might actually be foundational to the purposes of those institutions themselves and it does not allow for ways in which faith based perspectives may be necessary to the purpose of post-Enlightenment university.

Whilst uncovering the ambiguities in the kinds of secularity found in HEIs Gilliat-Ray's project cannot of course answer the question of whether there needs to be a more fundamental Christian critique of Higher Education on the basis of its foundation and purpose. This clearly requires a more extended theological discussion which will follow on from the policy analysis and discussion of the story and developing identity of HE chaplaincy. For Gilliat-Ray:

Clearly, higher education does not 'need' religion for its purpose, direction, or the integration of the campus community (Gilliat-Ray 2000: 144)

The third section of this study will look more closely at some of the key arguments which are currently offered for the importance of faith based perspectives to the academic process.

Where these arguments are offered they normally assume that these faith based perspectives must come through the study of theology within the academy. I will contend that chaplaincies have an equally important part to play in establishing an arena for the conversation between faith based and secular perspectives in the HEI.

In the influence of Gilliat-Ray's work on the Clines report (2008) we can begin to see how her study and similar sociologically based texts can create a dominant discourse on religion in Higher Education which then shapes a Church based report. There are, however, a number of other significant influences on the Clines report – and it will be helpful to see how the Anglican Church was positioning itself within these debates by looking sequentially at a number of key texts from this period. Examining these influences will help to establish just how much Church positions are being shaped by existing dominant secular discourses about religion in HE and how the Church is able to make use of these discourses theologically.

Church Reports and Government White Papers

1) Pillars of the Church 2002

In 2002 the Church of England's Board of Education for the Archbishops' Council produced *Pillars of the Church* (Archbishops' Council: 2002) a report on chaplaincy in Further and Higher Education based on a national consultation process including a number of stakeholders in FE and HE together with Church officers. The report stresses the ambiguity and uncertainty of HE chaplaincy as a Christian ministry. Interestingly the concern for the lack of a coherent narrative for HE chaplaincy is credited as a kind of strength with chaplaincy seen as an oral tradition of wisdom largely passed on through conferencing and networks. Chaplaincies are described as a form of mission which responds to the world's agenda and which is in danger of misunderstanding within the Church.

There is an interest in the “common ground” between the Church and institution (Archbishops’ Council 2002: 2) and the chaplaincy is seen as occupying this common ground through a process of translation - of “finding new language” for faith in the institution (Archbishops’ Council 2002: 4). Translation is one of the models for contextualising theology offered by Bevans (2002) and is a theme to which I will return in Chapter 3 to argue that it has considerable limitation in our current context.

Whilst the report seeks to hold together chaplaincy as part of the wider ministry of the Church with the importance of chaplaincy as a response to context, it is clear that the main thrust is to provide an apologetic in which chaplaincy is affirmed to the Church as a valid form of ministry and mission through which the Church is translated into the university. The model of translation makes a number of assumptions about the content of Christian presence (that it is analogous to a proposition whose meaning can be conveyed from one language to another) and about the context (that its “language” is capable of bearing this meaning). The report does not examine these assumptions to which I will return in Chapter 3 which offers a revised model of translation and narration.

2) Responses to the 2003 White Paper – Values and Economy

The consultation report of 2002 was followed by a full General Synod report in 2005. *Aiming Higher* (Board of Education 2005) is both a development of *Pillars of the Church* and the result of conversations about the values and purposes of Higher Education around the 2003 White Paper *The Future of Higher Education* and subsequent *Higher Education Act* in 2004. The report falls into two almost equal parts: a discussion of values in Higher Education and a consideration of the Church’s response with the resources it requires. In some ways this almost mirrors the White Paper with its dual concern for the principle of fair access and the practices of maintaining high standards with the resourcing that requires.

Aiming Higher leads us into a concern to be repeated in later Church of England documents that government policy is becoming too market driven and losing a sense of the underlying values and purpose of HE. The immediate Church of England response to the White Paper had critiqued what was seen as its market orientation, lack of deep reflection on the nature of HE and cursory discussion of values. Against this was set a theology of education as a search for truth which results in both a greater ability for the individual to serve society and a wider social benefit in the common good (Board of Education 2003: 2). *Aiming Higher* continues this line of thought shifting the focus of its argument to the public good of HE with its product of graduates as “public people” (Board of Education 2005: 17), and to an emphasis on a wider perspective on values.

The White Paper is critiqued for lacking a fundamental review and statement of the value of HE. In contrast to the language of the part of the document dealing with chaplaincy and other church responses to HE, there is a distinct lack of overtly theological language and Biblical reference in the discussion of values. Perhaps the intended audience for this first part of *Aiming Higher* is government and the HE sector as well as a Church readership, and the discussion is being deliberately translated into the language of public policy. The values which are proposed are taken almost word for word from the 1997 *Dearing Report* (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education 1997: 72). The report summarises these values through an extract from the Bishop of Portsmouth’s speech on the Bill to the House of Lords. The passage is almost a direct quote from Dearing (Board of Education 2005: 11).

In both the Bishop’s statement and the Dearing Report, the benefits of Higher Education are to serve a threefold constituency – individual, society and the economy. It is the role of the individual to contribute to society and economic activity and Higher Education equips for that role.

What is perhaps most interesting about this section of *Aiming Higher* is the way in which it avoids overt theological language. At one level this is a classic way to frame a common good

argument through a methodology of translating theologically formed concerns into a secularised public language. The use of such language both within a speech to the House of Lords and for a Church policy document may, however, suggest that what is happening here might best be understood as negotiation – the rhetoric of engaging persuasively with a partner from the standpoint of an established theological position. Such language can be part of the process of negotiation which constitutes the secular, multi-faith and Christian character of our public life. What this rhetoric appears to be lacking is the confidence that not only can it speak with its own theological voice in this public arena, but that the constituency to which it speaks needs and depends on it to do so. To be obliged to speak concerns only in the language of another is not to be allowed to speak freely in expression of our true diversity.

The critique of the White Paper as lacking in fundamental values may not be altogether fair. Faced with the necessity to review the funding of Higher Education the government papers of this period show a continued and principled commitment to widening participation ruling out the alternative course of constraining cost through a narrower and more elitist system. The massification of Higher Education is advocated in both economic and ethical terms. The 2003 White Paper introduced two major changes for HE – firstly and most infamously the advent of “top up” fees, but secondly it led to the introduction of the National Student Survey (NSS) as a key tool for enhancing the student experience. It is possible to link these two together as part of a more market, customer and management led approach to education, but the NSS can equally well be seen as a second phase of the widening participation project. Having made universities accessible to widening participation students the institutions now have to find ways to be responsive to them and to be changed by them. The market orientated rhetoric of the knowledge economy and the social values orientated rhetoric used for widening participation may be just that – rhetoric: two arguments employed to engage and encourage a public audience, but actually part of the same discourse.

In 2009 the reformed Department for Business Innovation and Skills produced a further report on HE: *Higher Ambitions: the future of universities in a knowledge economy* (BIS 2009). The title itself reflects the continuation of this tension in government policy. On the one hand it is about “Higher Ambitions” – ambitions for the achievement of the sector and the ability of HE to deliver personal development, but on the other hand the future of universities is to be tied to that of the economic power of knowledge. It is not the learning society which HE is to serve but the knowledge economy. The university is not to be a place where values are questioned, developed and examined but rather: “an initiation into our shared culture and civic life, and a means to foster our shared values” (BIS 2009 : 81) which “should model in microcosm the attitudes and behaviours that underpin a well-functioning civic society.” (BIS 2009: 82). The language of “shared values” has a history in the government’s concern to create an inclusive public for the Prevent strand of its anti-terrorism strategy. More will be said about this in considering the security orientated strands of thinking about religion in the HE sector. For now it is sufficient to note the tension between the apparent difficulties in articulating these “shared values” along with more easily expressed values of inclusivity in *Higher Ambitions* as it continues to argue vigorously for widening participation. The White Paper argues that even in a time of financial constraint the choice between driving up excellence and improving opportunity is a false one, and both aims will be pursued by the government (BIS 2009: 3).

The 2003 White Paper and 2009 Report reveal something very interesting about the nature of the public and political discourse around Higher Education, values and faith at this point. The secular language of the government reports is heavily reliant on economic arguments – it becomes necessary to describe the value of Higher Education in terms of positivistic economic values. Although this language does not exclude a wider discussion of values it does (at least in the view of the Church responses to the White Paper) overwhelm it. The 2003 and 2009 documents seem to lack confidence in speaking of values (without economics) when compared to the Dearing Report (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education 1997). The 1997 Dearing Report is entitled *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, whereas the

Department for Business Innovation and Skills 2009 White Paper is: *Aiming Higher – The future of universities in a knowledge economy*. The language of government has migrated from society to economy, from learning to knowledge, and debate seems to be restrained by the difficulty of articulating shared values.

The General Synod Debate on *Aiming Higher* reveals a great deal of nostalgia for a more leisured and less pressured environment in Higher Education. One particularly telling contribution, however, suggests that for a genuinely missionary ministry in HE:

we need to appoint HE chaplains who are more apologists and ethicists to the task rather than social workers and counsellors (General Synod 15/2/2005: 57)

This is chaplaincy not as an extension of the professions which help and support students but as the speaker of an alternative language within the secular institution. This idea of the chaplaincy as a narrator of Christianity is a powerful counterpoint to the difficulty in articulating values which is found in some of the government and sector documents. It is a theme which I wish to develop as part of a contextual theology for chaplaincy.

The changes which flowed from the introduction of a fees market and the renewed emphasis on student experience have had a more immediate impact on HE chaplaincy. Higher Education has become an environment in which greater importance is given to the measurement of performance and to outcomes. The chaplaincy located within this sector may now be called to account to the institution in terms of its impact on the student experience. This short analysis of developing government policy and church responses has revealed interesting developments in the mission of HE chaplaincy as a form of witness and presence within the public square. The situation for HE chaplains in practice, however, has become one in which their work is being increasingly evaluated by the university in terms of their contribution to the student experience, to issues of student retention and to international student recruitment from areas with high levels of religious practice and to the management of religious diversity. Clearly there will need to be careful negotiation between

this management model of chaplaincy and the model of chaplaincy as the speaker of an alternative language which I am beginning to outline here.

3) Establishment Repositioned - *Faiths in Higher Education Chaplaincy*

In 2008 the Church of England Board of Education produced *Faiths in Higher Education Chaplaincy* (Clines 2008) which is described as:

A report of a project funded by the
Faith Communities Capacity Building fund
commissioned by the
Church of England Board of Education

(Clines 2008: Title Page)

The subtitle has been reproduced here as printed because this exact description was a matter of some difficulty for the author and publishers. This is not a Church Report, but a publicly funded project which was “commissioned by” a Church body. The Preface by Kenneth Stevenson, Chair of the Church of England Board of Education explores this more fully asking what it means for an established church to be present in HEIs for those of all faiths and none.

The report comes to similar conclusions to Gilliat-Ray (1999) 10 years earlier – that HEIs and chaplaincies need to broaden their provision for faith support and improve religious literacy.

The positioning of the Established Church as the major partner for the government and universities in delivering this strategy is of particular interest:

We recognise, as members of the Church in the “public square”, that we have a responsibility to ensure that people with different needs have access to those who can support them, but also that sometimes our own chaplains are not best placed to enable that to happen. (Clines 2008: ix)

It is in one sense unsurprising that the Church of England should adopt this strategy towards the increasingly multi-faith nature of the public space. In effect it is a continuation of the way in which Establishment developed to respond to a society which had become “ecumenical” in the sense of expressing a diversity of forms of Christian life, with the Established church frequently acting as convenor of the Christian denominations.

I have suggested that the “shared values” of the government documents are never fully articulated. Perhaps these are not so much fundamental shared values but support for the procedural secularism which grew out of responses to an earlier moment in developing diversity. The assumption is therefore that this same consensus about how we proceed (rather than an agreement of foundational values) will also serve us in the new “multi-faith” moment. The positioning of the Church of England in this new moment looks exactly parallel and in continuity with its earlier responses to increasing diversity.

This position is reflected directly in the practice of HE chaplaincy. In 2008 there were 150 people working full time in higher education chaplaincy, 145 of these were Christians, with the vast majority of the full time staff being Anglican (Clines 2008: 12-13). Indeed the 2005 Report *Aiming Higher* and *The Church of England’s Higher Education Strategy* (General Synod 2007) which followed it both aimed for a whole time Church of England chaplain in every substantial HEI. Although mention is made of ecumenical models of funding whole time chaplains the original recommendation was felt to be so denominationally focussed that it led to a sharp response from the Methodist Church with whom the Church of England has a Covenant partnership.

In practice such whole time chaplains frequently occupy the role of “lead chaplain” or “co-ordinating chaplain”, reflecting this model of establishment as the convenor and speaker of the faith communities. On the other hand it puts the Church of England in a client relationship to the state receiving resources (such as funding for the Clines report) in order to

act as a manager of religious diversity. This is the role in which many university chaplaincies now find themselves positioned and they sit within it with varying degrees of comfort.

The Clines report enables us to see more clearly the actual situation on the ground and compare this to the modelling of this position which is offered in the official church statements. Although secular HEIs generally adopt the rhetoric that faith and belief groups are treated in a neutral and detached way, the reality in many institutions is that one faith community continues to act as convenor or even host to many others. This repositioned form of Establishment is essential to understanding the place of university chaplaincy in Britain today.

4) Dancing on the Edge – Ambiguity, Openness and Plurality

A contrasting approach and sharp critique of the Anglican-Establishment model is offered by the major Roman Catholic contribution to the literature on HE chaplaincy in this period.

Dancing on the Edge (McGrail and Sullivan 2007) is a report based on a qualitative survey of chaplains, which was then followed by an ecumenical colloquium. Papers from the colloquium, representing a wide range of perspectives and positions were then edited into a book with the original report. The result is something much more overtly theological rather than a hybrid document intended to be read by both church and state.

In common with the other surveys of chaplaincy considered here, *Dancing on the Edge* recognises the diversity and ambiguity of chaplaincy responses to HEIs. There is, however, a much greater emphasis on this ambiguity as a source of strength and no recommendations to regulate diversity or provide standard models. The effectiveness of chaplaincies is seen to lie far more in the network of personal relationships built by chaplains than in the degree to which the chaplaincy was integrated into or recognised by the institution. Both chaplaincies and institutions are thought to benefit from such informality which enables avowedly secular

institutions to receive the benefits of chaplaincy without having to compromise or renegotiate their self understanding as “secular”. The report suggests that these blurred boundaries enable balances to be maintained through relationships built on goodwill (McGrail and Sullivan 2007: 49).

The dangers of institutional isomorphism are recognised in the report, with the Anglican (and Free Church) models of chaplaincy as ministry to the whole institution exacerbating this. Multi-faith models of chaplaincy are said to suffer from a similar isomorphism with Christian models being extended into multi-faith teams and therefore failing to be attentive to the real nature of their diversity.

Roman Catholic HE chaplaincies have not gone down this institutional and embedded route and are consequently often misunderstood as being solely focussed on the Catholic community within the institution. This perception is seen as a misunderstanding of a differing approach to diversity from the Roman Catholic chaplaincy. By being present in the institution retaining all its distinctiveness the Roman Catholic chaplaincy is modelling a differing form of plurality in which authenticity and distinctiveness are not conformed so easily to institutional expectations or mediated through shared public languages. The methodology of chaplaincy, however, should be one of forming alliances and partnerships with people of all faiths and none, wherever goodwill and common ground can be found (McGrail and Sullivan 2007: 84).

Here then is an alternative understanding not just of chaplaincy but of the relationship with the secular. The model of building alliances with those of goodwill is very much based in Catholic social teaching on the common good. This model recognises and avoids the dangers of a client relationship into which an establishment model of fully embedded ministry to the institution can easily fall. The chaplaincy model offered in *Dancing on the Edge* looks very different from that in Anglican documents. By emphasising the edginess and ambiguity of chaplaincy as a “pas-de-deux” (McGrail and Sullivan 2007: 49) with the institution based on

concepts of the common good, the Roman Catholic model appears to steer around issues of co-option making a virtue out of relationships which are not overly contractual.

The common good which is sought in Roman Catholic Social teaching concerns the whole network of society and its relationship and cannot therefore be reduced in a utilitarian way to some kind of sum of human happiness (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales 2010: 8). Chaplaincy on this model is an engagement with and within a secular institution on the basis of seeking the common good through networks which enable human flourishing.

In contrast to the material produced by the Church of England, *Dancing on the Edge* offers a model of chaplaincy engagement which is clear about the distinctiveness of the tradition which it represents. The model, however, leaves open a number of questions. As the report itself acknowledges there is a widely held perception by ecumenical partners that Roman Catholic chaplaincy is too narrowly focussed on the needs of its own community and insufficiently engaged with the needs of the wider community and institution. A presence based on a distinctive tradition needs to be guarded against the dangers of separation if it is to remain a true engagement. This requires a positive understanding of the nature and possibility of the *saeculum*.

Secondly, there is an inherent fragility in any relationship built on "goodwill", it provides a strong platform for positive and consistent presence and engagement within the institution but is uncertain ground from which to offer critique, prophecy and challenge. The question with which we are left is whether this form of engagement based on the Church being Church in its own terms, but present as a partner in the secular institution through the common causes of common good is sufficiently robust as the basis for faithful witness in the HEI today. It can offer the freedom to represent wisdom within the institution, but it is in constant danger of falling back into a spiritual welfare service model supporting the needs of one distinctive faith community. If the secular institution finds it difficult to articulate its own

values in a coherent way we can no longer assume that a consistent engagement through the pursuit of the common good will be possible.

5) Interim Conclusions

The Anglican-Establishment and the Roman Catholic-Common Good models of HE chaplaincy as we have seen in their church reports are both vulnerable in their different ways to distorting relationships with the secular HEI. Inevitably both models have strengths and weaknesses, but it is not necessary to choose definitively between them. The picture which is emerging in documents from both the churches and the government can be described as one of “multiple modernities” (Bretherton 2010:15) and continual renegotiation. We have seen how there is not just differentiation between the positions adopted by various Christian traditions, but that the official statements of one denomination (the Church of England) are capable of being interpreted in several different ways. The evidence so far shows features of both a secular space differentiated from religious space in which “public reason” arguments are required in order to be heard, but also of interaction between public policy and faith communities in which both are shaping each other and of engagement along more traditional theological lines on the basis of the common good. Although in many ways the age of Establishment is past, it is certainly not over and has reinvented itself through the process which can be described as isomorphism or approximation. In such a situation faithful witness is unlikely to be encapsulated in a single form of response - multiple modernities may require multiple forms of witness.

The continuing presence of Establishment though in a much modified form can be part of the framework of a society which is secular, multi-faith and Christian. On the other hand a different form of faithful witness by the Roman Catholic tradition shows that distinctiveness and diversity do not mean disengagement from the secular institution or the public space.

Indeed such forms of engagement have the potential to offer an alternative model of diversity in which communities of faith are present and able to speak their own language in all its distinctiveness. This pluralist form of presence in diversity can be distinguished from a liberal form of presence in diversity in which some form of accommodation to a shared public language is made. We found this accommodation to a public language in many of the Church of England documents, but in *Dancing on the Edge* saw a rationale for engaging as a distinct community bringing its own language to the diversity of the shared public space.

These preliminary insights give us an outline for the shape of the place held by religion in the public space within which HE chaplaincy must operate. It is a complex space through which a number of currents run in different directions and at different speeds. It is also a space in which many negotiations are taking place between different traditions. This basic insight can now be carried forward to support the analysis of the second group of texts. This group of documents form a conversation between government, the HE sector and the faith communities in a time when their relationship began to be over shadowed by concerns about violent extremism and the processes of securitisation.

Dealing with Intolerance – Renegotiation between Government and Religion in the Higher Education Sector 2005 - 2008

1) Introduction and Background

Although the selection of documents examined here is small, it has proved perhaps the most significant exchange between the government and the HE sector on the subject of religion within the wider period which will be considered (1997-2011).

In 2005, following the attacks on the London Transport network, Universities UK (UUK – representing the Vice Chancellors), together with the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP) and Equalities Challenge Unit (ECU) produced an advisory document for HEIs (UUK

2005). This proved to be the first of a sequence of interrelated documents in which a dialogue was taking place between views from within the sector and government. All the documents postdate the terrorist attacks on London in July 2005, and it is important to see them in their chronological sequence:

1. *Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with Hate Crimes and Intolerance* (UUK 2005)⁷
2. *Promoting Good Campus Relations: Working With Staff And Students To Build Community Cohesion And Tackle Violent Extremism In The Name Of Islam At Universities And Colleges*(DfES 2006)
3. *Promoting Good Campus Relations – An Institutional Imperative* (ECU 2007) (an update of UUK 2005)
4. *Promoting Good Campus Relations, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism in Universities and Higher Education Colleges* (DIUS 2008)

The central questions put to these documents remain the same as before – what is revealed here about the changing role of religion within the public space of Higher Education and what is its import for HE chaplaincy.

Before looking at the documents in detail, it will be helpful to consider briefly the kind of advice which they replaced. *Extremism and Intolerance on Campus* (CVCP 1998) was produced by the Committee of Vice Chancellors and College Principals (predecessor to UUK) in a very different atmosphere. The advice concentrates on issues around political meetings and literature. The potential for religious intolerance is recognised but this is nowhere connected with violence or significant danger. The advice responds to these issues with a detailed interpretation of the legislation then current which it sets within a strongly ethical

⁷ The documents will be referred to in the text by the abbreviations given in brackets

understanding of the purposes of HEIs. The report is aimed at: “...more serious conduct which is not compatible with university values” (CVCP 1998: 6).

Although both “values” and “rights” appear only infrequently there is a background assumption that the values and purpose of the HEI are well known and understood. That which is threatened by extremism and intolerance on campus is not society or its values in general, but the university world and its own particular values of reason and freedom of speech. Speakers should not be restricted:

...however objectionable, odious or inimical to the purposes and values of the university and its members (CVCP 1998: 15)

Universities are assumed to have a particular place in leading the values of society as “beacons of light, liberty and learning” (CVCP 1998:34).

This high moral tone suggests a sector which far from being under pressure over extremism on campus sees itself as leading society in the debate over freedom of speech. Religious issues, however, are in the background whilst the university remains confident that it has a widely understood and accepted culture of values.

All of this is suggestive that at the beginning of the period under consideration there is an assumption – at least in university management - that the relative roles of religion, the public and the private are defined by a widely understood and accepted consensus. Hence it is possible to refer frequently to that which is “reasonable”, or what would be assumed by a “reasonable person”. This public reasonableness seems to be underpinned by the narrative of secular liberalism. Whatever complex realities and negotiations of identity or boundaries were taking place within the communities of Higher Education the view from above was that the liberal consensus remained solid and did not require fundamental change.

2) Government, Sector and Religion 2005-2008

A few years later the situation had changed dramatically and this consensus was clearly beginning to show some signs of strain. *Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with Hate Crimes and Intolerance* (UUK 2005) was produced by “Universities UK”, the sector’s representative body. Aimed at senior managers in HEIs, together with Students’ Unions and Trade Unions it replaced the 1998 advice. There was consultation with “a virtual steering group of representatives from religious and faith organisations, specialist organisations and higher education institutions” (UUK 2005: 8) though unfortunately these are not listed.

Much of the advice is again concerned with the interpretation of relevant legislation within HEIs and this is very much a management document – but one which is set within a framework of rights, and concerned throughout to defend academic freedoms. This time, however, the pressure on those freedoms is perceived to come from a very different source with legislation threatening to contain freedom of speech in support of the wider freedom and security of society.

Given that the UUK advice covers not just legislation current at the time of publication, but also anticipates forthcoming legislation, its underlying stance appears to be a defensive one – anticipating a higher level of media, public, government and security interest in religious debate on campus. There is a perceived threat, both *in* the university through the actions of extremists, and *to* the university through the government counter measures this might provoke (UUK 2005: 6). As we shall see shortly this is in contrast to the government documents which followed and were concerned with limiting the potential threat to society coming *from* the university as a source of extremism.

The emphasis of UUK 2005 is then on both the HEI’s responsibility to safeguard those within its community and on the freedom of that academic community itself. To protect these freedoms the Vice Chancellors adopt the language of individual rights and the incidence of the

vocabulary of “rights” and of “values” in the four documents is a useful starting point for a discussion of their underlying structures and assumptions.

Whilst the HE sector has sought to frame its discourse in terms of the rights held by individuals rather than values shared in communities, the first government document avoids both categories, and its replacement moves strongly towards an argument around shared values. The content of these “shared values” is, however, never explicit in the subsequent DIUS 2008. The contrast and subtle shifts in the sector language of “rights” and government language of “values” is charted in Table 1.

Table 1 occurrence of “rights” and “values” in DfES, DIUS, UUK and ECU documents				
	“rights”		“values”	
	count	Occurrence per 1000 words	count	Occurrence per 1000 words
UUK 2005 (sector)	69	4.47	2	0.13
DfES 2006 (government)	3	0.46	2	0.30
ECU 2007 (sector)	20	2.59	2	0.26
DIUS 2008 (government)	9*	0.96	19**	2.02

*4 of these occurrences are as “animal rights” – contextually as a source for potential extremism, rather than an occurrence of “rights” which require affirmation.

** 12 of these as “shared values”

Returning to our starting point in UUK 2005 - two features follow from the decision to frame the document within the language of “rights”. Firstly, it enables a strong connection to be made between individual rights, academic freedom, and the independence of the sector in responding to changed circumstances and potential legislation. Although reference is made to a context of terrorism in the name of Islam, the document returns to concerns over intolerance or hatred on the basis of “gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability or age” (UUK 2005: 10). The duty of HEIs up to this point has been to protect rights bearing

individuals in all their diversity. The less familiar task of promoting good relationships between *groups* on campus is seen as “daunting”, and best approached with safety through careful attention to current and forthcoming legislation and building strong institutional procedures for collecting data, reporting and responding (UUK 2005: 11).

Policy and decision making are therefore to take place within a framework of liberal political thought which assumes that the university society is composed of a collection of rational, rights bearing individuals.

Secondly, the use of “rights” language steers the report away from any potential discussion of underlying theological issues. Rather, in this case it provides an ethically rooted narrative in which neither the actions of the HEIs, nor those groups or individuals responsible for intolerance require any theological explanation. If an instance of intolerance is rooted in a religious perspective, the HEI does not need to consider that perspective – which as an individual opinion may be held as a matter of right – it need only deal with the effects of it. The religious meaning of the action does not need to become part of the public discourse of the university, and the public use of religious language is not needed to describe, define or deter those actions.

The DfES/DIUS documents are different. The language of rights is not adopted; rather we see value language being progressively introduced from DfES 2006 to DIUS 2008. Whilst the HEI sector initially framed its response to the terrorist threat in terms of a whole range of possible sources of discrimination against right bearing individuals, the government’s advice is at first much more narrowly focussed. *Promoting Good Campus Relations: Working With Staff and Students to Build Community Cohesion and Tackle Violent Extremism in the Name of Islam at Universities and Colleges* (DfES 2006) makes passing reference to other possible sources of extremism, but is unambiguously focussed “on the very small minority who promote violent extremism in the name of Islam” (DfES 2006: 3).

The advice then, is specific, but it is also to be “practical” (DfES 2006: 3), it is concerned with examples of responses to concrete situations. The advice points to the danger of difference leading to segregation and proposes a process of integration (DfES 2006: 8). The specific focus on violent extremism in the name of Islam, and the intention to deal with concrete situations leads to a wholly different public language from that offered by the HE sector itself, and the government document begins to tentatively approach the theological issues avoided by UUK:

Violent extremist activity in the name of Islam is justified using a literal, distorted and unrepresentative interpretation of Islamic texts...

The vast majority of Muslims in the UK and abroad reject both extremism and violence...

A clear distinction should be made between these extremist individuals and the faith they might claim to be associated with or represent. (DfES 2006:6)

Statements like this have become a commonplace, so much so that we might miss their import – here is a government document offering an opinion on Islamic hermeneutics, asserting a strongly held view on what does and does not constitute authentic Islam and in doing so claiming to speak for a majority of Muslims. These statements may indeed be wholly justifiable, but they are made in a public document without citing any Muslim sources in their support. The advice considers student Islamic societies, their choice of speakers, their practices of prayer and the use of prayer spaces on campus. It encourages careful consideration of the acceptability of literature being distributed or of external speakers. These “practical” matters can only be addressed by analysing the actual content of religious literature, of talks, sermons and websites. Reference is made to UUK 2005 and the advice is presented as building on this in a more concrete and specific way, suggesting that the former is being presented as a more theoretical framework for this applied advice. In reality the two documents differ fundamentally in their understanding of the issue.

The framework of rights adopted by UUK 2005 does indeed give the advice a more grounded and theoretical basis but one which avoids the necessity of engagement with religious

language and thought *per se*. By adopting a more “practical” rather than “theoretical” tone it is the government document which takes a step towards introducing a greater range of religious language into its public domain.

The two documents, however, initially reacted against each other with DfES 2006 generating a sharp response from the HE sector.

It took a little while before a second round of more considered advice came from both sector and government. The simplest way to see how the two strands developed is to continue to follow the sequence chronologically.

ECU 2007 is an update on the 2005 UUK advice produced in response to requests from HEIs for advice focussed on religious and racial intolerance (ECU 2007: 1). It represents a very definite shift of focus, directly driven by the experiences of a changed climate in the sector. There have been three significant changes since 2005:

- New legislation, including The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, and The Terrorism Act 2006
- The document is much more focussed towards issues arising from religious communities than the 2005 advice
- A shift in emphasis in describing the relationship between the HEI and the wider community

This last change is perhaps the most fertile ground to explore if we are to understand the relationship between sector and the state and between the religious and secular in this document. If UUK 2005 claims a very particular place for the universities within society similar to the “beacons of light, liberty and learning” (CVCP 1998: 34), of its predecessor, the 2007 update is more sober in its assessment, “the HEI represents a microcosm of society” (ECU 2007: 21). The development of government policy thinking on community resilience and

cohesion is seen as relevant to the HEI which is itself a community facing similar issues and requiring similar social capital and cohesion in order to respond.

By focussing on these areas of government policy rather than the security focussed advice of DfES 2006, the ECU document aligns the sector with government policy, but does so on its own terms. The contribution from the sector should be based on its own values and strengths – as centres for the free exchange of ideas HEIs are particularly well placed to develop and model the kind of good community relations which are envisaged.

Inter-faith dialogue and encounter on campus are encouraged as just such an example of a response built on the traditions and values of the university. The sector can of course also contribute research adding to society's self understanding of its own diversity.

Alongside this comes a reaffirmation of the importance of good civic and community contacts for the HEI. Relationships with the local faith communities are highlighted as being of significance and mutual benefit and should form part of the individual HEI's strategy to build community (ECU 2007: 12, 23).

The ECU advice encourages HEIs, to value the contribution of student faith groups, promote inter-faith activity, consider allocating spaces for faith use on campus and to build channels of communication with local faith groups. The earlier advice documents primarily discuss religion on campus as a matter of individual choice and belief – in ECU 2007 there is shift of emphasis towards the relationship of the HEI as a community and institution to the faith communities which are found within it and around it.

By 2008 the DfES had been replaced by DIUS and the 2006 advice was reissued as *Promoting Good Campus Relations, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism in Universities and Higher Education Colleges* (DIUS 2008). This document took into account both the ECU and UUK statements and completes the exchange which is being considered here.

There is much emphasis on cohesion and in particular on shared values (see *Table 1* above).

The HEI is presented as both representing these values and having a distinctive role in fostering them. The advice affirms the importance of UUK 2005 and ECU 2007, and at least in its opening sections has clearly paid careful attention to the arguments of the latter.

Recognition is given to the distinctive nature of the sector's response in its aim to:

...reiterate the need to promote shared values and foster cohesion in our student population and to highlight the clear role that universities have in creating spaces for free and open debate to challenge violent extremism (DIUS 2008: 4)

The bulk of the report, however, remains concerned with more security focussed advice – understanding the radicalisation process, recognising and supporting students who are deemed to be at risk from this process, identifying and reporting behaviour which might indicate involvement with or support for violent extremism. The advice has been sharpened since the previous document, the section on radicalisation in particular is more formed and informed. The 2008 document appears to be holding together the government's immediate security concern of 2006 with recognition of the sector's work to create a response based in its own values, traditions and abilities.

The real turning point in this exchange of advisory documents is probably ECU 2007.

Although presented as a management tool for HEIs responding to a new situation and fresh government legislation it represents an important shift in position, supported by a powerful and positive argument.

The Vice Chancellors' advice of 1998 was able to assume that the sector's independence and values were well established and widely understood. By 2005, UUK was framing both a defence of the sector's independence and its response to "hate crimes and intolerance" with an argument based on individual rights, and at the same time admitting that the sector was unfamiliar with more community based responses action. The ECU update of 2007, however, has made a significant move. Perceiving the pressure of securitisation as a new threat to the sector's values and independence the argument shifts from the defence of academic and

sector freedom based on individual rights towards a much more community focussed approach. Instead of elite communities leading society in its values of freedom and tolerance, HEIs are now a microcosm of society itself, delineated from it by permeable boundaries. They are communities in which students and staff may hold multiple allegiances and identities linking them both to the values of the sector but also to other communities of belief and value. Religious beliefs are no longer simply individual choices to be protected by the rights of the individual but recognised as more complex and rooted identities which require dialogue and interchange between the values of the university and of the faith communities. Within these complex negotiations the university itself represents a community of values – and it can no longer assume that these values are widely accepted or understood in the society in which it operates. The university and the HE sector have to recognise themselves within the wider society as one of the many communities of identity and value whose voices are heard on the stage of public debate.

DfES 2006 had presented the campus as a place where extremist threats may emerge and therefore proposes that the university should develop responses which are shaped by security work (i.e. gathering and reporting information on students). The sector's response is to reject this form of securitisation and offer instead a distinctive contribution based on its own traditional values and skills – dialoguing and debating ideas, creating communities of respect, and extending knowledge through research.

In fact, DfES 2006 is never mentioned in the ECU document – the sector clearly intended to set its own agenda. Academic freedom and sector independence have been defended by acknowledging a new scenario in which there are many competing voices. There remains, however, a public space in which these voices speak which is recognised to have some form of common narrative. There is still a narrative of secular liberalism in which a shared public space with a common language is differentiated from a private space within which religion is located. The nature of this public space, however, has shifted in the decade since the Vice

Chancellors wrote their advice on extremism and intolerance in 1998. Public reason arguments still hold sway, but there is a greater recognition that this form of public discourse is in itself the product of one particular community of values and cannot imperiously assume its pre-eminence in a way which once it could. There is almost a note of urgency in the search for “shared values” in DIUS 2008. The government’s determination to affirm these seems out of proportion with its lack of certainty as to their content.

Chaplaincy is surprisingly absent from the exchange of documents which took place between 2005-2008, in the early documents it is not mentioned at all but gradually emerges into the conversation as the focus begins to turn from policy to application:

Table 2 occurrence of “chaplain/cy” in DfES, DIUS, UUK and ECU documents		
	count	occurrence per 1000 words
UUK 2005 (sector)	0	0
DfES 2006 (government)	0	0
ECU 2007 (sector)	2	0.25
DIUS 2008 (government)	8	0.85

The two occurrences in ECU 2007 both refer to chaplaincies as potential recipients of the advice, whereas DIUS 2008 treats chaplaincy as an agency which can help to deliver its key objectives. Chaplaincy is mentioned as a partner in the delivery of three of the five objectives with particular emphasis on Key Objective Four: “To provide support for students who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance” (DIUS 2008: 10-11).

The absence of chaplaincy from the more theoretical discussions of the first two documents is as marked as the way in which it begins to be present as the focus turns towards application and delivery of objectives. Chaplaincy is valued not so much as the authentic presence of faith traditions able to engage in the conversation over values and purpose in Higher

Education but more as a lever for change and a tool for managing religious diversity effectively. This trend would become even more marked in the succession of advice notes which followed the inclusion of religion and belief as a protected category in employment legislation. Increasingly the purpose of chaplaincy seen from the standpoint of the secular HEI would become threefold – to contribute to the growing student experience/satisfaction agenda (especially with regard to highly valued international students), to manage religious diversity (including statutory obligations) and to reduce risks to the institution arising from violent extremism in the name of religion. These trends will become clearer in the third part of this chapter which looks at the changes brought about through new Equality and Diversity legislation.

3) Pluralism and Otherness - Responding to the Debate

An emerging concern from this discussion is the nature of diversity and of “otherness” which is revealed in these particular documents. At the start of the period under consideration otherness and diversity within the sector are seen primarily as the right of the individual to be themselves. So long as the rights of other individuals are not transgressed the HEI as an institution does not directly concern itself with this otherness. Emerging within the documents, however, we have seen an increasing recognition of the need for a more negotiated kind of public space in which traditions of value, belief and wisdom are taken into account as well as the otherness of individuals. There appears to be movement from accounts which emphasise the neutrality of the public space and the rights of individuals towards what I will describe as a more pluralist account which emphasises shared values, communities of belief, forms of life and identities. The liberal tradition of rights and a public space differentiated from private and religious space remains possibly the dominant force, but does so in a way which is far more aware of the contradictions involved in claims to neutrality. The new pluralism in the university seems at times agonistic with conflicts over resources, at

times far more dialogical with government and sector inviting faith communities into the policy conversation, at times to be recruited as a tool for managing and maintaining the equilibrium of the new diversity. We might perhaps describe the emerging form of public space in which HE Chaplaincy bears witness as “liberal-pluralism” - a combination of the liberal political tradition of religiously neutral public institutions and individualism with an awareness of an increasing plurality of communal voices and traditions.

University chaplaincy is faced with the question of how to be a faithful Christian presence in this developing context, and how to join the conversations which it necessitates.

Alongside the policy texts considered so far stand a number of briefer advisory documents dealing with the day to day management of a religiously plural HEI. The focus is on forms of religious dress, religious obligations, timetabling and the rights and responsibilities of staff. These management documents must also be considered in order to understand the way in which religion is increasingly seen as a management issue in the university. Like the more foundational policy statements the management documents show an unwillingness to allow faith to be addressed in its own terms. By making religion a management issue the significance of the presence of faith communities within the HEI is defined in terms of those features which impact on the processes and resources of the institution. This managerial approach appears superficially as a form of neutrality by the institution towards the religious diversity it enfolds, but in reality reveals an underlying understanding about the fundamental nature of religious life which it is essential to understand for the context of chaplaincy in HE today.

Equality Legislation 2003 to 2010: Sector Responses – Religion as a Management Issue

1) Introduction

The introduction of a new legislative framework for equalities in the years 2003-2010 has been a major factor in shaping the place of religion in the HE sector. Much of the documentation surrounding this legislation is aimed at university managers – it is about actual responses and seeks to offer these as interpretations of what it means for the HEI to be compliant with changing legislation. In this process new sector standards began to emerge for the procedures and the facilities which would be seen as indicative of compliance and good practice. As “management” documentation this material is presented in a way which often appears disconnected from foundational issues of principle. The analyses offered so far of government and sector documentation have, however, shown that behind such discourses of detached reason actually lie theological and ideological presumptions. Secular documents couched in the language of policy can still represent theologies in the broader sense of offering a reasoned account of the nature of religion.

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 gave much greater clarity to the place of religion within equality and employment law. This was followed by the Equality Act 2006 which requires HEIs to provide facilities and services on campus which are free from unlawful discrimination on the basis of religion and belief and the Equality Act 2010 which further extended protection against discrimination. Legislation was not, however, the only driver in the HE Sector giving increased attention to the religious needs of students and staff in this period. The changing profile of HE resulting from Widening Participation, a turn towards the “Student Experience”, the emergence of new quality measures such as the National Student Satisfaction Survey and recognition that students increasingly see themselves as fee paying customers all served to increase a sense that religious presence required religious provision and that this process had to be managed.

The main organ through which the Sector has sought advice on this new situation has been the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU). Jointly funded by representative bodies for the universities and direct government money ECU's advisory documents have been widely regarded as the basis for best practice. We have already noted their specific contribution to the issue of violent extremism and campus relations, alongside this stand four advice and guidance documents focussed on managing diversity effectively in the light of the legislation and situation:

Employing People in Higher Education: Religion and Belief (ECU 2005)

Guidance for Students' Unions and Christian Unions (ECU/UCCF/NUS 2007)

Religious Observance in Higher Education Institutional Timetabling and Work Patterns
(ECU 2009a)

Religious Observance in Higher Education: Facilities and Services (ECU 2009b)

These advice documents were followed by a survey published as:

Religion and Belief in Higher Education: researching the experiences of staff and students(ECU 2011)

Again the aim in considering these texts is focussed less on the detail of the advice and more on the underlying shape of the place of religion in the public space of the university and the context for chaplaincy which that represents.

2) Employment Rights

The first of these documents is by far the most substantial and reflective and is taken as groundwork by the subsequent guidance notes. It does not just deal with the day to day employment and human resources issues which the new regulations generated, but with

more fundamental questions about the purpose of such procedures in HEIs. The whole approach is to be proactive in creating the kind of university environment and culture which will support the regulations. Such a proactive approach is, however, seen as bringing positive benefits to the HEI way beyond the avoidance of legal jeopardy (ECU 2005: 18).

Institutions are encouraged to consult widely and build their policies around evidence and need. There is, however, a very distinctive approach to the nature of relevant evidence and the need which is being identified. HEIs do not normally collect statistics on the religious affiliation of students or staff in general, and it is not so much this which is proposed as taking into account the effects of forms of religious life on the running of the institution. Key areas of concern are identified where religious forms of life directly impact on institutional functions such as timetabling, catering, health and safety and use of space. It may seem obvious that an institution should be primarily focussed on these issues, but in many ways for all the proactive agendas which are proposed, the guidance actually begs the question about the nature of religion or belief and how it is present in the institution. Relevant evidence comes from the need for religion or belief to be accommodated around these institutional functions. Religious presence which does not raise these functional issues becomes sidelined as not relevant.

The report's use of the 2001 census data further illustrates this point:

- 77% identified themselves as having a religious affiliation. Within this figure, those who identified themselves as Christian were in the majority followed by those identifying themselves as Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish. (ECU 2005: 5)

The 2001 Census results actually show 71.8% of the population self identifying as "Christian" with only 5.4% as the total for "All non-Christian religious population" (Office for National Statistics). Quantitatively the presence of religions other than Christianity is actually very low on this evidence. Little weight is given to this evidence about the nature of religious identity nor is the overwhelming provision of chaplaincy services in HEIs by the Christian churches as a public form of religion seen as significant in the guidance. This is not to suggest that significance is related to size – rather that the decision to focus on shaping policy around

forms of religious practice which impact on institutional functions cannot simply be presented uncritically as a pragmatic and evidence based approach. The way that the question of religion in Higher Education is being framed by the legislation and guidance necessarily creates a filter. This filter produces two immediate effects, firstly it makes faith traditions more visible and prominent in proportion to their impact on institutional processes, and secondly it filters out any consideration of a heritage which has been shaped and formed by Christianity.

There are immediate and practical consequences to this. Most HEIs now make at least some provision of space for Islamic prayer. Following the ECU guidance this is a reasonable adjustment for the institution to make. A distinctive kind of space is needed of a sort not normally found within the university (carpeted, clean, but empty of furniture and subdivided for men and women) and a distinctive time pattern of use makes this impossible to synchronise with normal university timetabling. The factors of timetabling and space use are significant institutional functions so a reasonable response is to allocate a particular space to be reordered for this use. A Christian Union student group may have a similar attendance as Islamic prayers, but their needs can be met using commonly available classroom space timetabled outside of normal teaching requirements. In terms of legislation and policy this clearly fits together, but it is very likely to lead to the Christian students feeling overlooked and that their faith needs are not acknowledged by the university in the same way as those of Muslim students.

This approach to policy making has the potential to be divisive, but by focussing on the impact of religion on institutional functions it also fails to offer any framework for negotiating and communicating between the more fundamental “otherness” of the religious traditions. When a significant issue was raised by a Christian group within HE the response produced by ECU reveals further weaknesses in this approach.

In 2006 a dispute between the Christian Union and Students' Union at Exeter University led to reconsideration in several universities of the place of Christian Unions as affiliated to both the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) and the local Students' Union. The dispute had concerned the basis of full participation in the local Christian Union and whether this met the Students' Union's policies on diversity and equality. As a response to this the ECU worked jointly with UCCF and NUS to produce a short briefing paper on the issues which had been raised: *Guidance for Students' Unions and Christian Unions* (ECU/UCCF/NUS 2007).

The carefully worded statement sets out the obligations of both the Students' Unions and their societies and creates some frameworks for resolving disputes, but it fails to resolve the fundamental issue at stake. On the one hand Students' Unions are entitled to insist on open and democratic processes in all the societies they sponsor, but on the other faith based societies are entitled to define their own terms of belief and to restrict both membership and leadership of their societies accordingly. So for example the question of whether a conservative Christian student group could include within its constitution a clause on restricting leadership of the society to men would be permissible as an act of self definition of religious belief, but unacceptable as a Students' Union society procedure. If the conversation is framed in terms of "rights" then this becomes one of a series of conflicts between rights which have to be negotiated in such a framework.

The document marks an uneasy truce rather than a means of resolving the central issue of a secular establishment (in this case the Students' Union) which identifies itself as religiously neutral but which actually represents a set of values which can be in conflict with those of some of the faith communities coming under its establishment umbrella. What is presented as an order in which the Students' Union provides a safe and neutral space to accommodate diversity is actually a *modus vivendi* in which the parties operate through give and take and by simply not choosing to raise issues which are known to be conflictual. The very fact that this document could only be produced and presented as a collaborative product of ECU, NUS and

UCCF (a conservative religious group) is indicative that we are looking at a series of negotiations rather than a universal paradigm. What we see once again is that the apparent domination of the secular liberal paradigm in the public space of the university is only one part of the story and the context for chaplaincy is one of operating in a complex and renegotiated space.

3) Management and Negotiation

The two further advice notes produced by ECU in 2009 are introduced as being management documents, their content is meant to be “practical” (ECU 2009a: 1), “useful” to managers (ECU 2009b: 2) and consistent with “operational needs, resources and overall mission” (ECU 2009b : 1). Such language can of course be used simply as an appeal to hard pressed managers to give their attention, but it can equally well be an outworking of the kind of pragmatic approach which Gilliat-Ray (2000) identified and advocated at the start of the period under consideration.

The approach continues to recommend evidence based policy making within the individual HEI with evidence gathering and impact assessment, HEIs and their staff need to be more aware of faith based needs, and above all these are best responded to by good communication and negotiation. Once policies are made they need to be clearly communicated by the institution to students and staff, whilst students and staff need to have clearly marked channels through which to indicate their religious concerns to the institution. Sufficient faith literacy (although this term is not used) in the institution to understand and weigh religious needs must be matched by the individual responsibility of students and staff to identify clearly and in good time when they may be faced with issues such as a clash between timetabling and a religious obligation. Worked examples are offered creating a general environment in which each institution is encouraged to apply the advice contextually.

4) Religion as Management - Interim Conclusions

Religion on campus in these texts is not a foundational issue in which the nature of the HEI is explored, nor is it presented as a problematic or threatening intrusion into a secular space. The presence of religion is presented simply as a given – part of a whole range of complex and overlapping factors which shape and frame the modern university and to which the manager has to respond in a professional and balanced way. The presence of religious practice on campus is non-negotiable as it is governed by a legal framework. At one level this leads to a lack of discussion – the question of the meaning of faith on campus for the nature of the university is no longer a matter for consideration by managers, whose task is simply to negotiate a reasonable settlement within the aims of the organisation. This does, however, mean that a whole series of lesser discussions must ensue – focussed once again around prayer spaces and times, forms of dress etc.

Despite the balanced and careful language, beneath and behind these documents lies the continuing characterisation of religion as a centrifugal and divisive force. The foundational concerns of purpose, value and world view are left on one side for all discussion to focus around a series of day to day negotiations in places where religious ways of life may create friction with the institution. Chaplaincies consequently become engaged in this task as providers of professional expertise and key agents in evidence gathering, negotiation and service provision. It is a model of chaplaincy which I will describe as the “Religious Affairs Office”. Although the secular establishment of the university has, in some ways, evolved into a secular and multi-faith environment it has done so on the basis of a remarkably thin account of the presence of religion within HE.

The “thinness” of this account should not be taken to mean the absence of any underlying ideology. Rather it can be seen as a measure intended to limit and define the presence of faith in the public square. A managerial account of faith in the HE sector can be linked to an understanding of the HEI as a religiously neutral public space. Managerialism isolates those

features of religious identity which become visible in the life of the HEI and identifies these as the defining characteristics of religion. The descriptions offered of religious life are therefore characteristically thin ones contrasting with the thickly textured accounts which faith communities give of their own distinctive practices.

The effect of this narrow account can be highly distorting. The relative importance to the HEI of a given religious way of life becomes defined by those features which are most difficult to accommodate within the life of the institution. Islam with its claims on space and time becomes a major issue for the institution whilst most forms of Christianity remain almost unnoticed. In a sector where there is inevitably competition for resources there have been a number of instances in which student Islamic groups have been in open conflict with their institutions over prayer space. Perversely the very act of creating prayer space can lead to competition between faith groups for access to this space with students of one faith group feeling marginalised by the attention given to another. Far from being detached, equitable and irenic, this kind of managerialism can become distorting and divisive - a self-fulfilling secular prophecy of faith as a centrifugal social force.

Whilst the Religious Affairs Office model provides a role and rationale for chaplaincy, there is clearly a need for discernment in how it is accepted and an opportunity for witness in the way it is conducted.

Chapter 1: Conclusions

1) The Changing Nature of the University

Although a number of underlying themes have enabled a consistent account to be offered here, it is clear from the material surveyed that no simple picture can be offered. The emerging picture is that although the liberal settlement still dominates it does so in a changed way, with less confidence and perhaps more self awareness. Religion is much more visible in

the HEI and more openly discussed in HE policy forums. The public spaces of the university and of government policy still proclaim themselves as “neutral” towards faith which belongs in the private space. We have seen, however, that even the most superficially detached and secular statement of policy are actually harbouring hidden accounts of the nature of religion. This neutral stance is mainly worked out through a thin managerial account of religious presence on campus.

We have also seen the continuing effects of Establishment, and the ways in which faith communities seeking to engage publicly in HE have undergone an isomorphism towards the existing forms of Christian presence. This Christian presence has undergone a similar isomorphism towards the secular institution but at the same time continues to help shape the language and form of these secular institutions which in turn helps shape the presence of other faith communities in the university. The picture emerging is of the university as an increasingly plural secular and multi-faith space though still in some ways shaped by its continuing Christian heritage. In this university the phenomenon of difference is being managed rather than allowed to underpin and influence the process of being a university.

The order, proportion and influence of the secular, multi-faith and Christian will vary enormously depending on the context, but the public space of the secular university is clearly being reshaped by the new circumstances and its multi-faith environment. All of this is happening within a framework where the dominant account of the secular institution continues to be one shaped by the tradition of political liberalism with its themes of the neutrality of public space and the dominance of the rights bearing individual. In the second chapter which charts the history of HE chaplaincy within a narrative of developing diversity in the university I will argue that this secular liberal tradition continues to be influenced by its historic origins in the emergence of a denominationally diverse form of Christianity.

The liberal secular political framework for the public space has recognised the increasing pluralism in rights based legislation on diversity and equality which in turn has led HEIs to

approach religious diversity predominantly through the management of religious expression where this impacts on the life of the institution.

2) The Repositioned Establishment

This emerging form of liberal-pluralism could be seen as a kind of new Establishment which seeks to co-opt religion into its own multi-faith models. The original and continuing religious Establishment of the Church of England has responded to this (and indeed contributed to the process) by gradually transforming into a moderator and agent of delivery for the new secular and multi-faith Establishment. This is, however, consistent with the trajectory which the Church of England had already adopted in the light of an ecumenical Christianity in which it was also positioned as spokesperson for the Christian communities. Faith communities are increasingly being invited to share in multi-faith chaplaincy teams in which a Christian – typically Anglican – full time chaplain acts as a “Lead Chaplain” or “Co-ordinating Chaplain”. This new position seems to reflect an earlier one in which the same space was shared between Anglicans and Nonconformists. An alternative to this model can be seen in the approach of the Roman Catholic Church to chaplaincy, with its greater emphasis on the distinctive identity of the Catholic community and an engagement with the institution and its diversity on the basis of the common good.

There are both strengths and weaknesses in all the approaches we have seen taken to the new liberal-pluralism by different sections of contemporary Christianity in the UK, but given the complexity of the situation it is unlikely that a single model can fulfil the Church’s calling to offer faithful witness within Higher Education.

3) The Changing Nature of Chaplaincy

The effect on chaplaincy of this particular exchange of views between government and sector and of the new managerialism towards faith communities in the sector has been twofold and demonstrates that what has been described is indeed a process of renegotiation in which the position of all parties has changed. I will offer a fuller typology of current chaplaincy responses to the changing situation after these recent developments have been set within a wider historic framework. At this point it is sufficient to identify two significant areas.

By far the largest immediate impact on HE chaplaincy has been in terms of the development of multi-faith models to respond to the new plurality. We have seen how Establishment has been repositioned within this process and examples of ways in which faith communities which are entering the HE chaplaincy field for the first time are having their presence shaped by the existing traditions of chaplaincy. Both Gilliat-Ray (2000) and Clines (2008) have recorded these changes and their work shows how these new multi-faith teams tend to sit on top of existing models of chaplaincy which essentially remain. Part of the argument of the historical analysis in Chapter 2 will be to contend that chaplaincies so far have tended to be extended from ecumenical to multi-faith teams rather than reshaped in more fundamental ways, but this situation may not hold for long. Some HEIs are now exploring redeveloping chaplaincies as Well Being Services, or Faith Advisers with posts open to applicants of all faiths and none.

The second impact is more directly related to the documents under consideration here and concerns what might be called the professionalisation of chaplaincy in response to the new managerial culture and security concerns. The professionalisation of chaplaincy across all faith traditions has formed one of the policy strategies to strengthen transparency in student faith groups and support those who are perceived to be vulnerable to radicalisation processes. It has also been part of the Church of England's Higher Education Strategy (2007) which emphasises improved processes of selection and training for chaplains.

This narrative of professionalisation has also had an important place in recent discussions around Christian HE chaplaincy (Robinson and Baker 2005). The narrative of securitisation within the sector is closely associated with risk management and an increasing concern for the value of institutional reputation as an important asset in the developing competitive market of HE. Whilst at one level the sector itself has shown a strong tendency to resist securitisation in all its forms, at another it has accepted the agenda within its own management culture as part of a strategy for risk management.

These two broad trends of multi-faith development and managerialism both drive towards a Religious Affairs Office model of chaplaincy. This model both responds to and results in institutional expectations of chaplaincies as providers of services in response to what the institution recognises as the expressed religious needs of students. Chaplaincies are enlisted as the managers of religious services and facilities in the HEI. Chaplaincies which are less embedded in the institution may not adopt this full management role, but as a religious professional the chaplain may still be treated as a source of religious expertise and advice though with the institution managing the resources through another department. I will describe this less embedded model in which the chaplaincy becomes the professional advisory service as the “Consultancy Model”. These models are, however, partly shaped by the accounts of religion in the HEI as a series of institutional issues to be managed. Providing support and expertise for these institutional agendas is becoming a necessary condition for the presence of a chaplaincy. This raises the question of how the missional character of chaplaincy as faithful witness can be found within or exercised alongside these required institutional functions. To engage critically through these models of chaplaincy will require reflection on the distinctive contribution which the Christian community can make to the increasingly pluralist university through its chaplaincies.

4) Finding Wisdom in the Public Discourse of HEIs and Government

The language of government documents in the period seems increasingly to speak in positivist and economic terms. Although the policies remained highly committed to a set of values focussed around widening participation the language has had difficulty in expressing these values in fundamental ways. The language of economic justification holds the appearance of value free neutrality – it is technical, evidence based, measurable and consistent with the neo-liberal market led economic policies espoused since the 1980s. This avoidance of any meaningful conversation about values may be part of the attraction which the discourse of instrumentalisation and marketisation holds for government in its approach to Higher Education.

I have argued that the public space of HE is far too complex and contested to be characterised as “neutral”. At times this space appears to be contested with conflict breaking out over rights or resources, and at times it seems more negotiated with dialogues taking place between sector, government and faith communities. We need a richer and more thickly textured account of the public space of HE in order to make sense of this and to understand the nature of the chaplaincy witness within that space.

In his exploration of *Christian Wisdom* David Ford writes of the “inter-faith and secular university, a campus where there is shared ground among those of many faiths and none.” (Ford 2007:288)

In this university there will be:

...the creation of an institutional space that might be described as ‘shared ground’ or ‘mutual ground’. It is to be contrasted with both ‘neutral ground’ and ‘contested ground’. (Ford 2007: 289)

This vision of the shared public space of the university is rich in possibilities for faithful witness to take place and it is one which I want to explore as the argument of this study develops. The

kind of dialogues and negotiations which it proposes could take place alongside and grow out of the work of the chaplaincy in supporting the institutional needs of the university and provide the much needed distinctiveness and direction for a Christian presence through chaplaincy. It is within these conversations that I want to locate the meaning and purpose of chaplaincy in the secular university today.

The following chapter traces the history of HE chaplaincies within the story of developing diversity and offers typologies for chaplaincy responses to different forms of plurality. The brief chaplaincy literature review in the introduction to this study identifies that a theme of ambiguity runs through the descriptions of HE chaplaincy which lies “between Athens and Jerusalem”. The dialogical presence of chaplaincy in the secular university is not therefore confined to the developing multi-faith models and teams - it is intrinsic in the faithful witness which chaplaincies seek to offer through their presence in secular HEIs. Those chaplaincies, however, which have an internal inter-faith conversation may be in a particularly strong position to model such a wider dialogue with the institution itself.

The difficulty which the emerging secular and multi-faith establishment has in addressing that which is genuinely other can be seen in management documents which attempt to find a *modus vivendi* between institutional functions and those forms of religious life which impact on them. These management documents were all produced towards the end of the sequence I have considered – they are the logical outcome of the earlier policy formulations. University chaplaincies are increasingly engaged in helping their institutions to manage these very issues. Whilst this is a significant form of service to the HEI it is in effect a reflection at the local level of the position adopted by the Church of England nationally. The inherent danger of this position is that the Church and chaplaincy become client managers of the secular society’s religious diversity in terms which are set for them by a secular tradition. In order to avoid this client relationship the chaplaincy needs to find its own way to support the institution in its concerns, creating a meaningful dialogue with the institution as it does so.

The kind of managerialism towards faith communities which has resulted from a rights based approach in policy and legislative frameworks has led to a focus on those features of religious life which have more obvious and immediate impact on institutional processes. By focussing on managerial issues of process and resource, more fundamental questions of the relationship of faith communities to the core business of the university are avoided. Exactly what that core business is, requires further discussion, but clearly it has something to do with knowledge - the transmission of knowledge and the extension of knowledge. These processes of knowledge are, however, strangely ignored by the managerial accounts of the university which we have seen in the literature.

I have already referred briefly to David Ford's account of the university in his study of *Christian Wisdom* (2007). Ford's theology of the dialogical wisdom of faith stands in sharp contrast with the managerial accounts of religious life in the HEI. The account of chaplaincy which I want to develop draws on the theology of Ford and others who can provide us with an understanding of the university and knowledge as essentially a series of conversations within a community of knowledge. For this reason I want to speak of the chaplaincy which is in a continual process of negotiation with the university.

The policy analysis of this chapter has clearly revealed the significance of the questions of diversity and otherness within and for the university today. It has also shown the difficulty of addressing the genuinely "other" which seems to exist for the secular and multi-faith establishment. In response to this I will explore theologies of the other and of dialogue which focus on the relationship of host and guest.

Finally the policy documents show the difficulties in finding a public language in which to address all of these issues. For the chaplaincy this is a question of finding an appropriate theology for contextualising faith in the university. The themes which I wish to develop here will be found in the tension between contextualisation as translation and as narration.

At present this is no more than a sketch of the theological territory to be explored. The second chapter offers a further exploration of the context through studying the development of chaplaincy as it responded to increasing plurality.

Chapter 2:

From Establishment to Plurality - The Search for a Coherent Narrative

The Theological History of HE Chaplaincy

1) Introduction

The context for HE chaplaincy which I am presenting here emphasises the importance of growing diversity and the way in which this is being accommodated within the public square. Whilst the nature of the secular institution is being changed by this new religious diversity it is doing so within an account which continues to be dominated by the liberal political tradition of a religiously neutral public space. The interaction of this diversity and the revised secular liberal tradition has tended towards a thin managerial account of religion in the university. Where HE chaplaincy appears at all in these agendas it is mainly as a potential management tool with pressures to conform to the institution's agendas.

In this chapter I want to analyse some of the responses which HE chaplaincy is making to this situation, but in order to do so it is necessary first to give a short account of how chaplaincy has historically developed in response to increasing diversity. In some ways the present situation is not new.

The historical sketch which follows is not intended as a full account but I hope it is sufficiently detailed to support the narrative of HE chaplaincy which is offered here. The first part of the chapter therefore traces the history of university chaplaincy and the development of the secular university from about 1850 until the end of the twentieth century. This history will be set within the trajectory of increasing diversity leading from Establishment to plurality and this growing plurality will provide the basic shape to the narrative which I will offer. With the analysis of recent policy developments in the first chapter and this theological history in place,

I then want to offer a typology for contemporary HE chaplaincy responses which will form the second part of this chapter.

To trace the development of university chaplaincy is to enter a territory which, if not uncharted, certainly lacks definitive guides. Studies of individual chaplaincies exist at an institutional level, as does denominationally specific material (especially in regards to the history of Church foundation colleges of Higher Education). There are accounts relating to the development of specialist and sector ministries but no single published study has attempted to cover the field across denominations, institutions and time. It is not the purpose of this chapter to fill such a gap which would require extensive research in the archives of many churches and HE bodies. What follows can only be a sketch which has been prepared for a specific purpose – to establish the basic shape of the relationship between Christianity and the modern secular university in Britain, and in particular the part played by HE chaplaincy within this story. The aim will be to uncover the underlying structure of the relationship of chaplaincy to the secular university to see how these complex and contested modernities appeared. Through looking back in order to construct a coherent narrative for HE chaplaincy it will be possible to see that these shifting, negotiated patterns are not new, but rather part of the underlying structure of modernity and secularity and the way this interacts with chaplaincy.

The lack of a coherent narrative for the story of HE chaplaincy in the UK may actually have hampered its development. In a paper on the professionalisation of HE chaplaincy written to propose a new professional body for chaplains, Robinson and Baker (2005) see this lack of narrative as symptomatic of a wider failure in HE chaplaincy and the Church to reflect on this ministry within HEIs:⁸

⁸The professional body proposed by Robinson and Baker eventually took shape as the multi-faith Higher Education Chaplaincies Association (HECA). The association was dissolved after less than 5 years.

...in Britain there has been little research, or accumulated and collated wisdom about HE chaplaincy. There is not even a coherent narrative of the development of chaplaincy (Robinson and Baker 2005: 26)

This gap in understanding is indicative of the difficulty which not just the churches, but chaplaincies themselves have had in recognising and reflecting upon the distinctive nature of ministry within the diverse secular institution.

The foundationally secular institution can present a model, almost a microcosm, of the secular society. If the churches struggle to understand their mission and ministry within the small world of the secular university it is perhaps because they are uncomfortable and unclear about their role within the wider and more complex space of a diverse secular society. The specialist nature of chaplaincy as a form of witness and presence in the secular institution puts this wider relationship with secular society into sharp focus. This chapter argues that the story of chaplaincy in UK universities through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reveals just how much our current situation of multi-faith and secular diversity has been shaped by an earlier quest for an ecumenical diversity. Some patterns of response to increasing diversity have repeated themselves in very different situations, as has the process of approximation in which the religious and secular forces appear to shape one another. The history also suggests an underlying connection between liberal theology and the liberal political paradigm casting further doubt on the latter's claim to offer a religiously neutral public space.

In order to produce an account which is adequate to develop the argument but without claiming to be either a comprehensive or definitive history I will follow here some of the limitations which were outlined in the introduction. Firstly, I am concerned here with the history of chaplaincies in England and Wales. Secondly, this is a story of chaplaincy in the secular university and the history of chaplaincies in Oxbridge colleges and other Church foundations is assumed as a starting point for the developments to be traced here. The material has been accessed primarily from three denominational traditions: Church of

England, Roman Catholic and Methodist. Despite the obvious limitations, the latter is allowed to stand for the Free Churches.

2) From Establishment to Denominationalism 1850-1950

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Higher Education in England was directly under the control of the Established Church with a series of religious tests excluding religious minorities from Oxford and Cambridge. By 1850 this had changed little with the exception of University College London whose very interesting “secular” foundation will be discussed in more detail later. The new degree awarding institutions of Durham (1831), King’s College London (1828) and St. David’s Lampeter (1827) either imposed similar religious tests to Oxbridge or at least required attendance at chapel (Bebbington 1992:259). The pattern of university life was largely collegiate and residential and the historic chaplaincies exactly mirrored this pattern – they were foundationally established and focussed on the liturgical life of a resident community. As the model had not changed there seemed little incentive for reflection upon it. A century later the churches (including the Established Church) were beginning to think actively about how chaplaincy could be extended to the already increasing number of students and HEIs, but they were doing so in a denominational way in the context of predominantly secular foundations. The university had become a religiously plural arena under the banner of secularism. Although there was comparatively little development within chaplaincy as such during this period the fundamental changes which took place in the second half of the nineteenth century are at the root of the key issue for Christian HE chaplaincy today – the meaning and nature of a Christian presence in a diverse and culturally (whether or not foundationally) secular institution.

The first and only exception to the Establishment dominance of Higher Education in the early nineteenth century was University College London (UCL). UCL was founded by an alliance of

Free Thinkers, Dissenters, Jews and Anglicans with a liberalising agenda, with Baptists being particularly prominent (Fiddes 2007). The place of theology within UCL was hotly contested at its foundation. Anglican supporters of the new College argued for the predominance of the Church of England in theological teaching and this was opposed by the other parties. The agreement reached was that the teaching of theology could only take place off campus. This, however, appears to have been a decision made in order to prevent the dominance over theology of the Establishment rather than to create a narrowly secular space without religious presence. Paul Fiddes argues that, “The decision to omit theology was thus to avoid a single-voice, single tradition theology” (Fiddes 2007: 73). The official absence of theology was, however, not the whole picture and as part of the compromise separate supplementary theological lectures for both Anglicans and Nonconformists were provided off campus with the approval of the college authorities.

Later in the century new HE foundations at Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool similarly depended heavily on the support of Nonconformity – not least for their financing – but took place along “secular” lines in opposition to the earlier dominance of the Established Church (Thom 1987:8). Bebbington (1992) makes a strong case that the omission or exclusion of theology from the redbrick Universities was not something forced upon the Christian community, but a result of its own internal plurality and an unwillingness in sections of the Establishment to accept that diversity in a public sphere which it could no longer dominate:

Religion was a divisive issue. Dedicated Christian men were eager to drop it in order to ensure the welfare of higher education. Secularisation was given a powerful impetus on entirely pragmatic grounds. (Bebbington 1992: 264)

But were those grounds entirely “pragmatic”? Fiddes interprets the foundation of UCL as a development towards a more religiously plural public space rather than a more religiously neutral one. There may be more here than a simple *modus vivendi* designed to keep the religious peace of the university. We could see this as the beginning of a search for a genuinely diverse and shared religious space within the university.

No mention has been made so far of the other significant religious minority of nineteenth century Britain – the Roman Catholic Church. A collection of essays published to mark the centenary of the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England and Wales includes a contribution on “Catholics and the Universities 1850-1950” (Evennett 1950). The collection is as interesting for what it excludes as what it covers. Despite a time frame which includes the establishment of the redbrick universities the focus is almost entirely on the protracted decision by the hierarchy to allow English Catholics to take advantage of the abolition of religious tests at Oxbridge during the mid nineteenth century.

In 1895 after the failure of attempts to create a Catholic college in Oxford, the English hierarchy changed its mind seeking and receiving permission from Rome for Catholics to enter the existing Oxbridge colleges provided two conditions were met: students were to be of a sound Catholic background, and compulsory supplementary Catholic teaching was to be provided. It was the latter which led to the establishment of the first Catholic university chaplaincy – its original purposes being more academic than directly pastoral or liturgical; functions which it was assumed could be provided by the local church.

This is not the place to discuss the creation of new universities in nineteenth century England and Wales more widely. There are complex historical, social, political and educational factors at work – the rise of the middle classes, the need for technical education in an industrialised economy, the rapid expansion of the knowledge base in the human and physical sciences and the shift of economic and political power to urban areas would all have to be considered. Within this complex context, however, the two key issues which emerge for the development of chaplaincy as a form of Christian presence in the university are the tension between Establishment and denominationalism and the initial inertia in imagining new forms of ministry to respond to the changing situation.

By the end of the nineteenth century this tension had helped shape the character of the new universities perhaps more than any explicit or exclusive secularist agenda. The “secular

university” in England and Wales is partly the result of an internal conversation within the Christian community uncertain of how to respond to its own diversity. The result was that at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century the hold of the Establishment on Higher Education was largely broken not by the forces of secularisation but by those of denominationalism. The traditional chaplaincies of the residential colleges continued unaltered but with the exception of Catholic involvement at Oxbridge new patterns had yet to emerge. The re-creation of the university as a secular space had, however, allowed the flourishing of religion as a voluntary activity.

3) Voluntarism and Denominationalism

By the end of the nineteenth century, as now, the sustained strength of religion lay outside formal structure and statutes and more within student run associations and groups (Gilliat-Ray 2000:23)

In 1848 the Cambridge Prayer Union was formed, it was followed in 1858 by the Cambridge University Missionary Union, and then the Confraternity of the Holy Trinity and University Mission to Central Africa. Between them these student organisations represented a variety of churchmanship (Bebbington 1992: 261). A number of student Christian groups came together at the end of the nineteenth century to form the Student Christian Movement (SCM), but the movement was split again in 1910 when the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union separated to form a more conservatively focussed Evangelical body (Goodhew 2003:61). With similar Christian Unions emerging in other universities the Intervarsity Fellowship (IVF) was created in 1928 to provide a national structure for these groups. When the work of IVF began was extended to include colleges the name was changed to the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) - the body to which university Christian Unions are now affiliated.

The two main strands of organised student Christian activity which eventually emerged were SCM and UCCF. Despite the considerable difference in outlook and theology between them, they share three key features:

- Student led, but with professional support inside the structure and external advice/support from the churches
- Mission focussed
- Inter-denominational – though neither of the groups could be defined as genuinely ecumenical as they are based on similar theological interests rather than a wider and more inclusive search for unity

Alongside these inter-denominational student bodies grew an increasing network of denominational student societies, which in many ways are more directly relevant to the growth of university chaplaincy. In 1922 a University Catholic Federation of Great Britain was established, later to be divided into two separate bodies for undergraduates and postgraduates (Evennett 1950:319). Methodism has perhaps the unique distinction amongst the denominations of having begun as a university Christian Society with the Wesleys and Whitfield forming the Holy Club at Oxford in the 1730s. By the 1760s, however, Methodists were less welcome in the university and six members of St. Edmund's Hall were expelled for their Methodism on the charge of being "righteous overmuch" with the case occasioning a brief pamphlet war (Firman 1960). Methodist Societies (Meth Socs) grew strongly during the first half of the twentieth century and by 1950 the Cambridge Meth Soc had between 300 and 400 members – equal in size to SCM and CICCU. (Goodhew 2003: 63)

Both Catholic and Methodist HE chaplaincy began through the support of these student bodies and to some extent Anglican chaplaincy may have followed suit. As Evennett (1950: 319) points out the origins of Catholic HE chaplaincy outside Oxbridge lay not in chaplaincy to

the university but in chaplaincy to CathSocs, and Methodist “student work” began in a similar way.

By the 1950s two cross currents seem to be at work: on the one hand Christian diversity as denominationalism had been a significant driver in the creation of the secular and diverse university, but on the other hand the separation of religion from the public life of the institution which it helped to create led to vibrant student Christian movements which crossed denominational boundaries and challenged the churches to think ecumenically. At the same time church sponsored denominational student groups emerged and through their direct links with the denominations and local churches, clergy became involved in chaplaincy amongst students. These were essentially local and pastoral developments. The Catholic chaplaincies at Oxbridge were appointments made nationally by the hierarchy, whereas those at other universities were made by the local Bishop (Evennet 1950: 318). This interesting distinction underlines the curious way in which chaplaincy in the collegiate universities seems to have exercised minds in the churches far more than that in the redbrick institutions. The growth of chaplaincy in the newer urban universities had been seen as an extension of existing pastoral care and received very little theological attention. These chaplaincies were understood as a continuation of a system of pastoral cover, rather than an expression of the Church’s mission within a secular institution. Apart from the embedded collegiate chaplaincies such formal church presence in the secular universities which existed in 1950 was peripheral to the life of the institutions, focussed largely on student voluntary bodies rather than witness and presence in the whole institution.

4) The Emergence of Sector Ministries 1950s – 1990s

In 1952 there were 8 Anglican chaplains in universities outside of Oxbridge (3 full time, 4 based in local parishes, 1 on cathedral staff) (Thom 1987: 7). Roman Catholics fared slightly

better with 18 chaplains in 1950 (Evennett: 1950: 318). By 1985 virtually all HEIs had an Anglican chaplain. Although considerable organisational effort had been given to this development, in its early stages at least there is a surprising lack of reflection on its meaning.

Fortunately there is one study of the growth of Anglican chaplaincy during this period – a 1986 PhD thesis written by Barry Morgan (then a university chaplain and to become Archbishop of Wales). The thesis is available in an abridged form edited by Kennedy Thom, then the Church of England's Secretary for Chaplaincies in Higher Education. Morgan made a detailed survey of the relevant archives and much of the information which follows has been taken from this source.

Morgan charts the development of Anglican university chaplaincy through the 50s, 60s, 70s and into the 80s. In its first phase of development he argues that chaplaincy was largely shaped by transferring models of parish ministry to university work.

In 1950 the main structural and financial commitment of the Church of England to the secular foundation universities was in providing halls of residence and the effectiveness of this strategy was being questioned. The model was clearly an extension of the collegiate system based on homogeneous resident communities and was looking less relevant to the new challenges of the secular institutions. A working party of academics was set up which produced a report arguing that chaplaincy rather than halls of residence was to be the way forward. The report noted the formative nature of the time spent at university and the significance of the university as a place committed to the free pursuit of truth. The importance of these factors was such that the church should appoint chaplains with an officially recognised status. When it came to the model for this chaplaincy work, the provision of chaplaincy centres was recommended. (Thom 1987: 3).

This set the pattern for the growth of university chaplaincy in the 1950s – which was to be centre based, largely student focussed and pastoral in character.

Morgan argues that five models of ministry appear to be at work in this early growth of university chaplaincy:

- The provision of chaplaincy centres provided focus for the work of chaplains but encouraged them to think of this work as an extension of the parish model
- An armed forces chaplaincy model drawing on the experience of the two World Wars in which Church accompanied a conscripted generation through chaplaincy
- A “professional” model – the growth of chaplaincy takes place at the same time as the establishment of counselling services for students. The chaplain can thus be modelled as a part of the new generation of professionals in student support services
- Mission as evangelism and evangelism as recruitment. A 1951 Anglican working party report stated the chaplain’s task as to ensure that undergraduates became members of the Church (Thom 1987: 11)
- The chaplain as expert – providing an authoritative theologically trained voice particularly in the technically and scientifically focussed university

Morgan does not frame these points as models of ministry, but already from his account we can see the pattern of “modelling” beginning to occur. Much of the subsequent theological reflection on chaplaincy has occurred around this question of providing models of ministry for chaplaincy. The recurring emphasis on providing models for HE chaplaincy is perhaps related to another common theme in the literature – the sense of rootlessness and uncertainty of purpose which has been a common feature of HE chaplains’ experience in the absence of a congregational base for their work.

The 1960s saw the first real moves towards the recognition of HE chaplaincy as a specialised ministry which required its own network. The Methodist Church appointed a national secretary with responsibility for HE chaplains in 1966, the Church of England in 1967 with the Baptists and Catholics following shortly after as national networks for chaplains began to

appear (Thom 1987: 3). This fits with an increasing acceptance by the churches of specialist ministries, though the argument continued about whether the development of specialisms was undermining the ministry of the local church and creating a danger of clericalism by devaluing the contribution made by lay people in their place of work.

Consequently the focus of HE chaplaincy in the 1960s moved towards the support of Christians within the institution to enable their ministry to be fully exercised. If the pastoral focus of chaplains in the 1950s treated the university as a parish with an unusual demography, the 1960s model as described by Morgan began to take seriously the very distinctive nature of the university community.

Developments in the 1970s and 1980s were to take this further and offer a much fuller theological reflection, but it would be as well at this point to ask what understandings of the nature of the Church might lie behind the developments of the 1950s and 1960s even if these assumptions are less than explicit in the available literature. I have suggested that the key issue arising from the nineteenth century was Establishment and plurality. This led to the development of denominationally based work with students in the first half of the twentieth century which ran parallel to cross-denominational student movements. Unsurprisingly the denominations were replicating their ecclesiologies in their approach to HE: Methodism, a denomination formed of local "Societies" bound together in "Connexion", formed Meth Socs (student Methodist Societies), Roman Catholic work outside of Oxbridge focussed on ensuring that priestly ministry was available to Catholic students and when the Church of England began to approach its ministry in HE in a more structured way in the 1950s it did so drawing on the models of forces chaplaincy and the parish system. It was the students themselves through organisations like SCM (with its reputation of being "the church ahead of the church") and IVF/UCCF who were exploring alternative models (Boyd 2007).

In the development of the redbrick universities of the nineteenth century we can see an agenda which is at least in part being driven by a question which Christians were asking

themselves – what forms of educational institutions best reflect our newly accepted denominational plurality? The changes of the mid twentieth century, however, are shaped more by the churches responding to questions which are being generated by the secular institutions of government and education – what forms of higher education are required to serve the needs of an increasingly technological economy in a society of equal opportunities, and what forms of professional support are required by students?

In the 1970s and 1980s a genuinely distinctive model of chaplaincy work in HE began to emerge for perhaps the first time and it is possible to engage with this in a more overtly theological way. Two documents stand out as particularly worthy of comment – *Partners in Understanding*(General Synod 1980), which gives an account of Anglican chaplaincy in HE, and *Going Public*(NSCP 1985), a report published by full time Polytechnic chaplains.

Partners in Understanding focuses on the nature of the institution; chaplaincy is seen as highly contextual both within the institution and within the Christian community which has corporate responsibility for the Church's mission in that institution:

Chaplains are there to serve this mission as people with theological and pastoral resources trying to help the Church in higher education to find ways of expressing the gospel verbally, personally, socially, politically and liturgically. (General Synod 1980:13)

Ministry to individuals, to the Christian community, and liturgical ministry are all to take place within the context of ministry to the institution. The secular institution is taken seriously as an entity in its own right whose culture and purposes have to be respected. This ministry to the institution is expressed through love for the life of the institution itself, through responding theologically to the work and disciplines within the HEI, through raising questions of meaning and purpose in its life and through a prophetic witness which recalls the institution to its core purposes whilst presenting it with the claims and values of the gospel. This ministry is to be evangelistic, but it must never be sectarian – it is to serve the needs of the institution rather than the Church. The litmus test of such ministry is:

...whether the Christian point of view, articulated in the texture of these institutions and expressed in caring and worship, comes across as good news. (General Synod 1980:22)

Going Public has three serious weaknesses:

Firstly despite the value afforded to the secular institution there is little sense that the Church has much to learn from it, nor is a theology of the secular institution articulated. The chaplain is described as ambassador, but this role is interpreted primarily as the visible and authorised messenger rather than the one who listens, interprets and reports back.

Secondly, there is an assumption that the Christian message articulated by the presence of the chaplain within the institution is answering questions of “meaning and purpose” which are being asked there (General Synod 1980: 14). This assumption is challenged in a discussion of Church colleges of HE at the end of the 1980s by May and Hey (1989). Hey sees in the oft cited phrase “meaning and purpose” a Tillichian existentialist theology in which the Church offers analysis and understanding of the questions raised by the human situation through its symbols and language. The gospel becomes a set of answers to a question which the world is presumed to be asking. The problem becomes whether or not the world is indeed asking these questions in a form which fits within the template which “meaning and purpose” suggests, and if it is, whether or not it is able to hear the Christian answer articulated in this symbolic language. May and Hey are challenging the assumption that contextual mission can take place through a direct translation of the gospel. This leads directly to the third weakness with the report.

Thirdly, the report does not address the issue of diversity within the institution. Admittedly this was written before the massification of HE, but as we shall see diversity issues were already very much on the agenda of the polytechnic chaplains. Although the report recognises the importance of the Christian voice being present in the secular space it does not really address the pressing question of how this voice can be heard.

Despite these weaknesses, *Going Public* represents a significant development in understanding HE chaplaincy as mission in context. This contextual and missional understanding of chaplaincy is carried forward in a second and very different document.

Going Public(NSCP 1985) represents something new – a reflection on chaplaincy from within the polytechnic sector in what was then a binary system of HE. The polytechnic colleges began in 1969 and continued until the end of the binary system in 1992 at which point they were awarded university status. As the report title suggests these were very much public institutions, funded by local authorities, under political control and with a vocational focus to their curricula. Chaplains found themselves working in institutions which had grown out of a tradition of local authority provision of education, encouraged wider access, lacked the sense of community founded on residence, offered limited opportunities to explore “meaning and purpose” through the traditional avenues of the humanities and were very overtly pluralist in religion and belief. This was a wholly new kind of secular environment for HE.

The tone of the report is purposeful, the polytechnic chaplains have something to report to the Church and a sense that their ministry is being undervalued. Conventional pastoral models are dismissed as a “rural idyll” no longer relevant to an urban society, whilst the traditional pattern of HE fares little better as “the university idyll” of the liberal arts education within the college community. The parochial and collegiate models are ruled out for the new context of the polytechnic college and new models are sought (NSCP 1985:11).

The theological resource for this new pattern of ministry is to be found in an understanding of revelation. By sharply contrasting Specific Revelation and General Revelation the report argues for a resurgence of confidence in a public faith based on “Christ the Creator, the public Lord of the Universe”, to be held in balance with a faith in “Christ the Redeemer, the private Saviour of souls” (NSCP 1985:13). Christ is affirmed as Lord of the institution as well as Lord of the Church.

In contrast to the official church report *Partners in Understanding*, the polytechnic chaplains seem more sensitised to the issues of epistemology which might be involved in ministry to Higher Education. Michael Polanyi is cited in support of the argument that all knowing is at heart a faith based activity requiring communities of knowledge to provide the necessary intellectual frameworks which undergird it. The need for a theology of chaplaincy to be linked to issues of epistemology in the institutions is a key insight and a theme which has already emerged from the study of recent policy documents. As knowledge is the very foundational purpose of a university, if chaplaincy is to minister and witness meaningfully to the institution, it must necessarily represent distinctively Christian ways of knowing within the institution.

The theology of HE chaplaincy has characteristically been expressed in terms of models of ministry and *Going Public* offers its own typology:

Collegiate Model: the historic experience of educational chaplaincy has been collegiate – in educational communities whose life was organic and generally expressed an agreed philosophy of education. This educational corporate life lent itself to a corporate liturgical life. It is representative of the “university idyll”.

Congregational Model: in the redbrick and campus universities chaplaincy is normally centre based and focussed on the gathering of a community around that chaplaincy centre. There are dangers of activism as the centre and therefore the chaplaincy, only seem relevant in so far as they are used.

Waterloo Model: the polytechnic, however, is more like a main line railway station through which passengers pass on their way to a variety of destinations. To set out to serve only a few like minded religious passengers would not be to take the function of the station seriously and the chaplain there (or in the polytechnic) needs to find ways of accessing the life of the institution (through its staff) and seeking to challenge its distortions (NSCP 1985: 18-20).

One further but very significant point needs to be made about *Going Public* – this is an ecumenical report. Chaplaincy in the polytechnics was often set up in these new institutions as an ecumenical ministry. In the urgency of the report to draw attention to a current situation it fails to make the connection between some of the historic forms of HE chaplaincy which it critiques and their context in terms of developing pluralism. So whilst the report seeks to renew the theology of chaplaincy it is not always fair to the contextual nature of earlier models and hampered by that lack of a coherent historical-theological narrative which was identified at the beginning of this chapter.

However brief these sketches are within the context of a report which is clearly intended to challenge the wider church (and also probably to lay claim to a more equitable share of the chaplaincy resources for the polytechnic world) they nevertheless begin to address the issues which were absent from the General Synod report three years earlier.

5) Lessons from History

Brief though this historical sketch may be, it has enabled us to see how several of the themes which emerged through the study of recent policy can be found underlying the development of the secular university. The history of the secular university in England and Wales is inextricably linked to a history of developing plurality. The interplay between these two histories has been a significant factor in shaping Higher Education as we know it today. If there is a coherent theological narrative for the history of HE chaplaincy then it lies in the story of this developing diversity.

The basic shape of HE chaplaincy appears to be largely defined by the form which the university is taking – hardly of course a surprising observation. What is perhaps more interesting is that the shape which the university takes appears to be significantly affected by the diversity of both the institution and of wider society. This opens the possibility that we

can chart the relationship between religious diversity, the development of the university and the story of HE chaplaincy in a way which will deepen our understanding of the many forms of HE chaplaincy today.

Finally, the theme of epistemology has been identified once again – what theology of knowledge is at work in and through faithful witness to an institution dedicated to the extension and transfer of knowledge?

Chaplaincy and the Diverse Society – a Coherent Narrative?

The argument so far has had two major strands – the first has been an analysis of the position of religion in HE seen through recent policy documents and reports. The second strand in this chapter has looked back more broadly into the history of chaplaincy searching for a narrative through which we can understand the contemporary developments. The narrative which is emerging links the shape of HE chaplaincy closely to the development of increasing diversity within society and within the university. Drawing together the two strands of the argument it is possible to begin to map the current topography of HE chaplaincy in response to the development of secularity and changing conditions of diversity. The discussion which follows sets the development of HE chaplaincy firmly within a narrative of increasing plurality. In the light of this narrative of development and the analysis of the current situation we can begin to see that the kind of secularism which claims the public square as a religiously neutral space actually rests on a series of far from neutral assumptions about the nature of faith.

The journey from Establishment to plurality is not a linear progression in which one form replaces another. Universities today continue to be influenced by the differing contexts in which they were founded and each new wave of foundation has had to stand alongside rather than replace earlier ones. It is commonplace in the HE sector to use broad subdivisions such as; “Oxbridge”, “Redbrick Universities” and “Post ‘92 Universities”. One of the ways in which

the Higher Education sector defines and differentiates itself is along fault lines produced by these main waves of university foundation and in many ways the historical narrative is also the contemporary narrative. In the section which follows, two maps of the chaplaincy topography will be offered. The first map is arranged by the nature of university foundations - it is primarily concerned with the formal structures and relationships between the chaplaincies and universities.

The second map charts the formal relationships between contemporary chaplaincy and the HEI against a spectrum of differing understandings of secularity today. Concrete chaplaincy responses as forms of mission and faithful witness in the university are then plotted onto these two axis. This links us back to the first main strand of the argument in which the analysis of public documents and policy developments reveal the fluid nature of contemporary secularity and religious responses within it.

1) Historic Chaplaincy Responses

The historical survey revealed how each wave of institutional growth in HE produced a new form of chaplaincy in response. Starting with the historic collegiate university and following the story through to the “new universities” we need to look underneath these developments to be able to see the fundamental patterns and movements which have been taking place.

a) Collegiate - Establishment

The classic form of the collegiate university belongs to what we can call the period of Establishment. Uniformity rather than plurality of belief and forms of life is the norm and the diversity which exists has to do so within this framework. The university is therefore founded

as a religious community with a transcendent object – the reality of knowledge is thoroughly underpinned by the reality of God. The collegiate university therefore mirrors the contemplative community in its architecture and organisation. Such a collegiate life is punctuated by liturgy and chaplaincy is therefore fully embedded through the liturgical life of a chapel and the pastoral community of the college.

We have seen how the continued existence of elements of this form of university life and chaplaincy was critiqued by Polytechnic Chaplains in the 1980s as a mere “university idyll” (NSCP 1985). This critique had a prophetic purpose in calling the Church to find new expressions of chaplaincy for faithful witness in a changed situation. As a comment on the historic collegiate university and the witness of chaplaincy found within it, the accusation of “university idyll” is of course a very misleading statement. The collegiate university was and is very purposeful – the medieval foundations were intended to prepare students for the professions then available (Williams 2004). There was a clear progression from university to employment and the college was no mere “idyll”. Collegiate foundations offered a professional formation grounded in a shared system of belief and values. In this tradition the formation of character, person and spirituality stands alongside the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Far from being a mere “idyll” the collegiate university is effective in serving the good of its students along with wider social goods. Although the origins of the collegiate university are in a form of society in which diversity is contained within an Establishment, it has proved to be an enduring form of the HEI.

The liturgical-sacramental-embedded form of chaplaincy offers an appropriate faithful witness in the collegiate university. The presence of chaplaincy in the collegiate university also continues to witness to its origin as a community orientated towards a transcendent object of knowledge.

b) Redbrick - Denominationalism

Continuing with what is admittedly a broad brush approach the second wave of university foundations in Britain came in the nineteenth century with new “Redbrick” campuses based in the growing metropolitan areas. I have argued that these nineteenth century university foundations reveal a complex history in their relationship to Establishment and to the place of religion within HE. The desire for more plural spaces of belief was as a significant factor in their foundation.

The concern to create institutions free from the control of the Establishment and the voluntaristic nature of religious life within the redbrick foundations had marked effects on the form of chaplaincy presence. The brief historical account I have offered suggests that chaplaincy became denominationalised in the redbrick foundations; each church tradition offering its own chaplaincy with a focus on chaplaincy centres and on activities which students and staff can choose to attend. Alongside this, student led faith groups began to emerge as a different expression of voluntarism, and it is within these groups that we first see the ecumenism which marks the next stage of chaplaincy development.

From the beginning of the urban redbrick university many students chose to live at home rather than in university accommodation. This choice, together with a shortage of accommodation also means that communal student residency in university halls has never been a universal experience for students in the redbrick foundations. The need for student accommodation came to be seen as an opportunity by the Churches – in particular the Church of England – to engage with students and the provision of Church managed student residences predates chaplaincy in many redbrick universities (Thom 1987: 3). The initial response of the Church of England to the redbrick urban foundations was to attempt to continue the collegiate tradition of student life as formation through residence in community. The development of denominational chaplaincies is not a simple replacement of the earlier model based on the collegiate community. Although denominational centre based chaplaincy

is a new development in this period it exists alongside the original collegiate model of faithful witness and presence.

c) Campus - Transition

The expansion of HE in the 1960s led to an interesting but in many ways transitional arrangement in the new campus universities. The creation of new campuses on greenfield sites is in some ways a move back towards the collegiate model. Students (or at least first year undergraduates) are normally resident on campus and the location takes the university out of the metropolitan area where close links to the many local churches are easy to form.

The chaplaincy focus in the Campus University tends to be in purpose built chaplaincy centres located on campus, often these buildings are shared by more than one Christian denomination, though with each denomination maintaining its own distinctive identity and presence. This period also marks an increasing specialisation and professionalisation in support services for students and chaplaincies are likely to be set alongside counselling services in this context. Access to public funding for HE led to a first wave of widening participation which would open up the campus to far wider diversity in the future.

The centre based denominational form of chaplaincy was carried forward to the campus university from the redbrick universities. The opportunity to create purpose built centres on the new campuses came in an environment of increasing ecumenical co-operation. This new environment led to chaplaincy spaces which were intended to be shared by more than one denomination. Whilst significant in themselves these developments can be seen as transitional and the broader pattern will be better revealed by moving on to a discussion of the next major stage of university development.

d) Polytechnic-Post '92: The Ecumenical Period

Much has been made of the work done by polytechnic chaplains shortly before the end of the binary system in 1992 and I have suggested that this work was in many ways prophetic for the place of religion within the whole HE sector. The polytechnics and the new universities into which they developed belong to an era of much more self conscious diversity in both society and the HE sector. This period is perhaps best described as “ecumenical”, and here the word is offered not just as a description of increasingly close co-operation between denominations but rather to characterise the whole self understanding of religious diversity at the time.

The polytechnics and the new universities which they became are frequently multi-campus, and although there is significant student residency in them many younger students will live “at home” travelling in to the university on a daily or occasional basis, whilst more mature students may well have chosen to attend a particular new university because they are already established in that area. This is the context in which the NSCP report of 1985 was produced, and it led the polytechnic chaplains to frame their ministry in ecumenical teams, to develop highly mobile patterns to cater for scattered communities and to focus on their HEI as a workplace in which they sought to influence the life of the institution.

During this period the nature of secularity became such that the religious voice was beginning to be seen as marginal rather than normative. Voluntarism underpinned the prevailing liberal secularism in that religion is essentially framed as a private choice for the individual with faith largely separated from the public life of the institution.

The historical study has shown that universities conceived as religiously neutral public spaces were in part the creation of a quest for greater Christian diversity. It is not simply the case that a dominant secular liberal philosophy defined religion into this private field and faith then took on the voluntarist mode in response. This could not happen without the conceptual apparatus first being available in which religion can indeed be framed as an essentially

individualist choice, or at least a choice which is somehow not being made within the public sphere. People of faith themselves have to be able to think of that faith as somehow separated from public life and have a theological framework for doing so.

This kind of liberal secularism which attempts to create a neutral public space through defining religion into the realm of the private choice and action can perhaps be linked to the importance of liberal theology during this period. Within a liberal theological tradition it becomes possible both to understand the diversity of faith as varying individual and cultural responses to a fundamental but shared religious experience and to frame religion as a series of individual choices in response to these experiences. The turn towards the human subject and emphasis on the experience of faith which are so characteristic of liberal theology have been described by George Lindbeck (1984) as “experiential–expressive” theology. Although historically this anthropic and experiential turn in theology is sometimes traced back to the Lutheran Reformation (Casanova 1994: 33-34), the liberal theological tradition perhaps emerges most clearly from Schleiermacher’s *Christian Theology* (first published 1821). It is not of course necessary that all people or communities of faith adopt this theological framework for a consensus to emerge around a religiously neutral public space. It is only necessary that such a framework is widely available and believable for the faith communities.

I have used the term “ecumenical” to describe the main form of diversity found in university chaplaincy during this period. The term is used not simply because this was a time of ecumenical co-operation but because through most of the period religious diversity was seen as essentially Christian diversity. The secular university believing in itself as a religiously neutral public space was familiar with religious diversity but experienced this primarily through the internal diversity of Christianity which took an organisational form as formal ecumenical collaboration in university chaplaincies. In the next section I will argue that institutional familiarity with Christian ecumenism and with Christian liberal theology is having a profound effect on how secular HEIs understand the religious diversity which they now

contain. In order to make this argument it is necessary to look briefly at parallel developments in the Further Education sector.

It was during this period that a rapid expansion of diversity began to affect the whole HE sector. The new universities with their urban locations and accessibility for students from non-traditional backgrounds perhaps led the way but they were certainly not alone in this, with many HEIs across the sector experiencing a rapid growth in the diversity of their student populations during the 1990s. The presence in strength of traditions and communities of faith which had previously been very marginal to university life brings us up to the current situation. It is a situation in which we need to ask whether and in what ways the liberal settlement of diverse private faith held within a neutral public space has been challenged and changed.

e) Current Trends: Multi-faith

There has not of course been a significant expansion in the number of HEIs since the creation of the new universities in 1992. Interestingly a small number of colleges with Church foundations have gained university status in this period. As church foundations these institutions had extant chaplaincies often based on traditional models. Whilst they represent a fascinating development in the increasingly plurality of HE provision, the story of their chaplaincies does not represent a new departure.

We can, however, look outside the HE sector into Further Education for examples of new trends in the formal shape of chaplaincies. Here we find new chaplaincies being introduced as multi-faith teams from the outset. In 2005 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) produced *Faiths and Further Education: a Handbook. Towards a whole-college approach to chaplaincy for a pluralist society* (LSC 2005). The document argued for the importance of chaplaincy as an expression of plurality in the college and for its contribution to the agenda of student

experience. Building on this the LSC then published *Multi-faith Chaplaincy: A Guide for Colleges on Developing Multi-faith Student Support* (LSC 2007). In 2008 a training manual was produced for FE chaplains in multi-faith context – *Welcome to Chaplaincy – a Training Programme for Multi-Faith Chaplaincy in the Further Education Sector* (LSC 2008). The earlier (2005) document was co-sponsored by the National Ecumenical Agency in Further Education (NEAFE) which existed alongside the multi-faith Faiths in Further Education (FIFE) organisation. By 2007 these bodies had been reformed into the multi-faith National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe), which works together under the FIFE umbrella with AFAN (All Faiths and None) an organisation providing teaching resources. This progression of bodies and their titles suggest a continuity between the ecumenical and multi-faith structure which is worth exploring. The new united fbfe was created:

...to take forward the work of its predecessor organisations in the context of the multi-racial, multi-cultural, globally orientated society in which the further education (FE) sector and its partners now work. (LSC 2007: inside cover)

This line of development is, however, already visible in the earlier document. *Faiths and Further Education* offers three principles for chaplaincy activity in FE:

Principle 1: FE chaplaincy has always been ecumenical in character and is now generally multi-faith, both in principle and in practice...

Principle 2: FE chaplaincies are usually multi-faith teams, built into college structures...

Principle 3: FE chaplaincies do not indulge in overt proselytism (that is, trying to convert students from one faith to another)... (LSC 2005: 9)

Again the movement from the ecumenical to the multi-faith is clear at least in the language of the documentation – but equally clear is the way that this has been presumed rather than resulting from deeper reflection. Principles 1) and 2) begin with observations of common practice in the sector – they are statements of what is generally done rather than statements of guidance for what ought to be done. The third principle is indicative of an approach to work in the multi-faith environment but does not offer a rationale for this principle based in

the self understanding of the faith communities. Although the title of the document speaks of “a Whole-college Approach to Chaplaincy for a Pluralist Society” there is an assumption that faith communities engage in chaplaincy on the basis that they do not offer competing truth claims, or at least if they do, that they will not compete within the public space of the college. The fear of religion as a divisive force and the narrative of the secular state as a necessary protection against these forces have been shown by Cavanaugh (1995) to have a history which reaches back to the very origins of the modern secular nation state. Within this wider narrative of the secular state the college or the university can also be presented by *Faiths and Further Education* as a neutral public space which protects against the centripetal forces of religion and the dangers of competing truth claims. Christianity and Islam are missionary faiths yet the impetus towards conversion has to be bracketed in some kind of epoché to enable formal engagement with the institution through chaplaincy. The FE or HE institution provides a space for diversity – but it does so on specific terms.

Multi-faith Chaplaincy (LSC 2007) offers direct and practical advice in setting up new chaplaincies in FE, and whilst several models are considered, all are multi-faith in composition. By this date discussion of ecumenical models has been completely replaced by the new form of diversity. Whilst understandable as a reflection of a changed situation of plurality the eclipse of ecumenical language has the effect of obscuring the underlying presumptions of the new position. Although the new position is ostensibly more pluralist it appears to have been created by extending the model of Christian ecumenism. The non-proselytizing multi-faith team is rapidly becoming the new rule of engagement for faith in the secular institution.

At the same time many HE chaplaincies have moved towards being multi-faith teams in the period since the mid 1990s. There is more to this than a simple response to the changing religious demographics of the student body – or indeed anxiety over the links increasingly being made between student religiosity and violent extremism. Tracing the development of chaplaincies through HE and FE sector policy and advice documents suggests that the multi-

faith model of chaplaincy at work here is really an extension of the ecumenical model. A belief in the rights and freedoms of the individual is a founding premise for secular liberal politics. If religious belief is seen primarily as the free choice of the individual then there must be an account of religious life as necessarily diverse.

George Lindbeck (1984) identifies four types of theological understanding and compares these against the test case of how well they can explain diversity in a multi-faith world. I have been describing the liberal tradition of theology in terms of what Lindbeck calls an “experiential-expressive” understanding of doctrine (Lindbeck 1984: 16). Such “experiential-expressive” liberal theology provides an account of diversity as differing expressions based on a common underlying experience. This tradition of liberal theology developed in Europe in an age when religious diversity was primarily focused in Christian diversity and the liberal theological account of diversity as the varied expression of a common experience or shared fundamental positions provided a strong public theology on which to base ecumenism. Religious diversity in the increasingly secular public square therefore becomes framed as a diversity based on a common underlying unity which makes it possible for religious communities to present some kind of common voice. At times this common voice is expressed through formal ecumenical bodies and at other times through a shift in the position of the Established Church which can act as a *primus inter pares* able to seek on behalf of other faith communities. The focus on the individual of liberal politics and experiential-expressive theology make it possible for religion to be both constructed as essentially diverse and at the same time a single unity with underlying shared experiences and assumptions and therefore capable of speaking in the public square with a common voice.

Liberal individualism in both political and theological forms was therefore one dynamic in the movement from denominationalism to ecumenism in chaplaincy. The presence of faith groups from other traditions is not a significant challenge to existing frameworks so long as they can place this new multi-faith diversity within the same narrative as the old

denominational diversity. The consequence is that multi-faith chaplaincy is developed on the presumption that this is a simple extension of the ecumenical model and the new diversity of faith can still be addressed as a unity and speak within the public square with some kind of common voice or common language. Taken to its extreme this model of multi-faith chaplaincy can and has led to situations in which an institution presumes that chaplains of different faith traditions are more or less interchangeable.

If I am right that the dominant account of religious diversity in the contemporary secular university is one of an essentially shared religious experience manifested in a diversity of religious forms then this has to be called into question by a chaplaincy which represents a much richer and deeper recognition of otherness. Diversity is not a troublesome phenomenon to be managed, it is essential to the nature of the secular space.

The role of the Church of England as a *primus inter pares* in the denominational-ecumenical field is now extended so that the Established Church – and to some extent the new establishment of the Churches Together organisation - become conveners and spokespersons of the extended diversity of the multi-faith scene. Small wonder that university managers often confuse and conflate the vocabulary of “ecumenical” and “multi-faith”.

Current public policy illustrates this trend of extending the ecumenical-denominational frame by seeking increasingly to consult jointly with the faith communities.⁹ London, for example has a system of Ecumenical Borough Deans whose functions include:

To encourage general ecumenical and interfaith co-operation including forging links with local Churches Together or similar groups and with representatives of other faiths. (London Churches Group Website)

The role of the group enables the churches to act and speak together towards the local government structures. This ecumenical action now has to recognise a new reality – that

⁹ This policy was outlined by two key government documents in the decade 2000 – 2010: *Working Together* (Home Office Faith Communities Unit: 2004) and *Face to Face and Side by Side* (Department for Communities and Local Government: 2008).

acting and speaking together as Christians in the public square will also necessitate speaking and acting with and sometimes for other faith communities. The ecumenical moment in the schema begins to blend into the inter-faith moment yet carrying with it remaining elements of the Establishment. At the same time government and the HE sector can assume that familiar ecumenical structures for religious voices in the public square can be brought forward and repopulated with the new wider plurality of communities.

It is possible to show the core of this argument in a simple table illustrating the narrative which has been constructed for the development of HE chaplaincy as part of the story of increasing diversity in Higher Education:

Table 3 Historic Foundations and Chaplaincy Responses				
HE Institution	Collegiate	Redbrick Campus	Polytechnic Post '92	Current HE trends, FE Colleges
Chaplaincy Model	Resident chaplain, chapel based community focus	Denominational chaplains, centre or local church bases, student group focus	Ecumenical team, multi-campus institution focus	Multi-faith team, spirituality centre, service provider and diversity manager focus
Ministry Model	Sacramental – recalling the community to God-centredness	Pastoral – gathering and nurturing the church in an alien place	Prophetic – bearing witness to the institution	Common Good – offering service on the basis of shared goals
Plurality	Establishment	Denominationalism	Ecumenism	Multi-faith

Like all typologies the table is essentially an over simplification but the value of it is to point towards one possible answer to the question with which this chapter began – can we find a coherent narrative for the development of HE chaplaincy? The typology suggests that such a coherent narrative might be found by setting HE chaplaincy in the context of developing diversity within secular society. It also suggests that the moment in the nineteenth century when the place of religion in the newly created universities was being debated was central to the development of this more plural society.

In what I have described as the Establishment period where a single culture of faith predominates chaplaincy is primarily a sacramental ministry in a Christian community. By carrying out the functions of a presbyter the chaplain becomes a sign of God's presence in that community and exercises a mission in which the community is being continually called to God-centredness. In the Denominational and Ecumenical periods chaplaincies become characteristically more pastoral in their ministry, gathering and growing the Christian community through activity in chaplaincy centres. The mission becomes one of going out to the Christian community as it participates in the university. It is in contrast to these two forms of chaplaincy that the polytechnic chaplains produced their report *Going Public* (NSCP 1985), with its sense that something radically different was needed at the end of the twentieth century and for brevity I have characterised this witness to the institution as a prophetic model of ministry. The current situation has inevitably produced a variety of responses in styles of ministry and in describing these in the shorthand of service to the common good I am seeking to identify and delineate a potential danger that chaplaincy may become a client service to agendas shaped entirely by the institution's own understanding of diversity.

It is, however, important that the table is not seen in a linear way. All these forms of university and of chaplaincy continue to exist and flourish. There is a historical line of development but the different stages overlies rather than replace each other.

A basic architecture for plural communities of belief resulted from the developing relationship of Nonconformity to the Establishment. This is perhaps what the founders of UCL were striving for when in their inability to agree on a single form of theology in their new institution they opted to exclude theology. In doing so they created a public space which professes neutrality but is in fact based on a consensus resulting from a denominational plurality and a revised form of Establishment. The kind of procedural secularism produced by these developments has been underpinned by the forms of denominational diversity found within the Christian community. There seems to be an assumption at work that these structures of

diversity can simply be extended to include other faith traditions without taking into account their wholly different “theologies”, narrative and histories. So for example the training handbook for FE chaplains in multi-faith contexts offers two theological approaches to multi-faith work. On the one hand this may be approached on the basis of an assumed core of common belief which is expressed in differing ways by different traditions or on the other through the differing expressions of our common experience of humanity (LSC 2008: 35).

Taking time to look at the ecumenical stage of the development of HE chaplaincy has enabled us to see how it can be a useful case study for the much wider question of the role of religion in the public square. It shows how the architecture of one stage of developing diversity and secularity can be carried forward into the next. Primarily this seems to have happened as part of a secular consciousness which presumes that the faith communities more recently arrived in our society in significant numbers must have a similar shape to those which were already present.

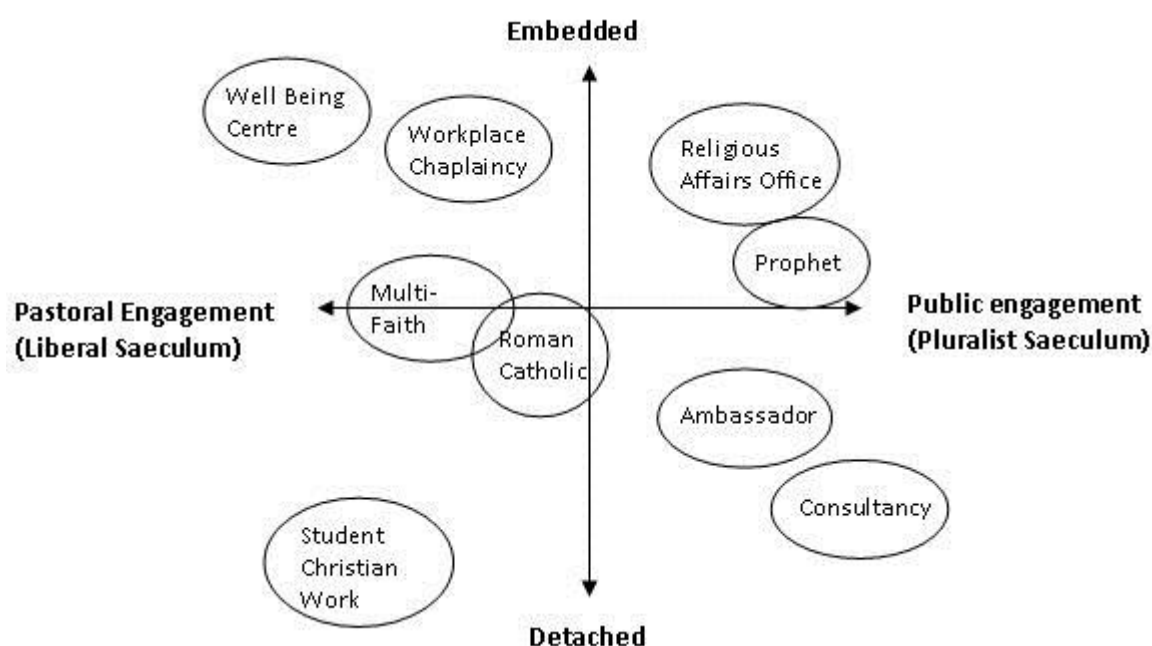
There are significant flaws and inherent instabilities in the current situation as I have outlined it. Firstly, what I have been describing as a liberal tradition of Christian theology is not of course the only theological account of ecumenical diversity. Christians can frame their own diversity in a variety of different ways. Secondly, the extension of the ecumenical model of diversity into a multi-faith society presumes that other faith traditions are sufficiently similar to the Western Christian one to be absorbed into the settlement on the same terms. In other words the description so far has been of a liberal secularity rather than a truly pluralist one in which the distinctive nature of diverse traditions are free to give their own account of themselves. Thirdly, the dominant model of ministry being exercised in this secular and multi-faith environment is unclear and appears to be based in concepts of service to the common good which can be found through shared goals with the secular HEI. There is a need to develop a more robust understanding for the current situation based in a theology of chaplaincy as mission and this will be addressed in Chapter 3.

This brief historical sketch of HE chaplaincy has therefore given us a usable coherent narrative for the development of chaplaincy within a story of developing secularity and diversity in the public square. Part of the narrative has been that at each stage of its development the previous paradigm is not so much replaced but adapted and included within the new one. Using this narrative we can now look more closely at the contemporary shape of HE chaplaincy for clues about the paradigms which are currently operating.

2) Chaplaincy Responses to the Changing Nature of Secularism

The first schema summarised in Table 3 has produced a tool for understanding how the differing formal relationships between HE chaplaincies and their institutions are located within a historical narrative of developing diversity. The second schema is far more tentative than the first and attempts to represent diagrammatically the landscape in which HE chaplaincy now takes place. It will not be possible to locate every instance of chaplaincy unambiguously within that landscape, as many of them will exhibit features which will position them in more than one location. The identity of any given HEI and its chaplaincy will be complex and there is no contradiction in a chaplaincy seeking to operate more than one model in order to maximise the potential for faithful witness in its situation.

Table 4 Chaplaincy and the Saeculum



In this schema the vertical axis represents the formal relationship between the chaplaincy and the institution.

Typical features of an embedded chaplaincy would be:

- one or more members of chaplaincy staff employed by the university with a recognised status and line management within the university's HR structure
- facilities provided by the institution and located within its campuses
- university administrative support and training
- recognition and location of the chaplaincy within the university's departmental structure
- part or even full funding from the institution
- chaplaincy contribution to university committee structures
- specific responsibilities for the chaplaincy within university wide agendas (eg. managing prayer space, improving student experience)

- chaplaincy contribution where appropriate to teaching/learning and staff development

In contrast a detached chaplaincy would show few of these features and would primarily be an externally based and funded service provided to the university community from the Churches and other faith communities.

The horizontal axis is more difficult to define unambiguously as it attempts to show a spectrum of understandings of secularity. Given the complex nature of contemporary secularity it would be possible to draw this axis between a number of different poles. The single line offered in this schema is therefore being asked to carry considerable weight and it is perhaps easiest to work from the effect to the cause in describing the concept behind this. The effect of these differing understandings of secularity in HE chaplaincy is a range of responses from a primarily individual engagement with students and staff in a traditional pastoral model (on the left) to a primarily public and corporate response to the institution at the other (on the right). Behind this range of responses (and recognising that in reality these are not mutually exclusive) lie different constructions of the secular space.

The left hand pole of the axis I will describe as the *liberal saeculum*. Here the secular space is seen primarily as composed of rights-bearing autonomous and rational individuals. The liberal saeculum is by no means exclusive of religion and can be open to transcendence but such religiosity and transcendence are seen within the framework of society as a contractual arrangement of individual wills. As we have seen, religious diversity within the liberal saeculum can be underpinned by forms of theology which emphasise the shared experiential nature of faith. Faith groups are not defined in their own terms but rather as expressions of a common religious experience. Yet the liberal framework which is used for this definition is itself a complex product of both religious and (narrowly) secular impetuses towards a more diverse society.

On the right of the horizontal axis lies not a single position but a cluster of understandings which I have summarised by the term *pluralist saeculum*. Here the secular space is understood in a more communal or contested way as a plurality of communities and forms of life – both religious and non-religious. The presence of these communities will have different weight in different areas of this society - so liberal secularism becomes one of these forms of life – though admittedly a dominant one. Christianity may sometimes appear as one faith community amongst many in a multi-faith society, and at other times retain a distinctive place as the host faith community engaging in hospitality as an act of holiness (Bretherton 2006). Within the pluralist saeculum, faith claims a place in public life in its own terms and on the basis of its own theological self understanding. Chaplaincy in the pluralist saeculum therefore becomes more engaged with public issues within the life of the HEI directing its faithful witness towards the whole institution, its purposes, values and structure. Clearly this pluralism needs a much more detailed theological analysis, but I will first attempt to clarify the concept by illustrating its effects in the forms of chaplaincy taking shape in the present complex situation. The structure which emerges from this will then become material for a deeper theological understanding of chaplaincy in the next chapter.

Within the four quadrants formed by these two axes are placed seven representative models of HE chaplaincy. These are not meant to cover the whole range of chaplaincy responses but are sufficient to indicate the typical locations occupied by chaplaincies within this contemporary topography of the saeculum. In some cases clear instances of the model can be shown within UK universities, whilst other models represent more theoretical positions only elements of which will be found in any specific place. These more theoretical models nevertheless continue to exert an influence on the practice of HE chaplaincy.

a) The Embedded-Pastoral Chaplaincy

The top left hand quadrant of the schema represent HE chaplaincies which are embedded in their institutions with a high level of recognition and engage primarily on a pastoral model within the individualism of the liberal saeculum. “The Well Being Centre” represents a recent development, though one with deep roots in the past. At the University of the West of England in Bristol the on-campus chaplaincy centre formerly known as “The Octagon” became “The Living Centre”, operating three teams: Faith and Spirituality (faith advisers), Health and Wellbeing (including alternative therapies) , and Pastoral Care. The Living Centre Website explains its core purpose through inclusive language carefully avoiding traditional religious vocabulary:

UWE is committed to the creation of sustainable, healthy and inclusive learning environments which support positivity and promote community and individual wellbeing. One of the key methods of achieving this is through the provision of personal and enhanced development opportunities for students and staff. The Living Centre provides physical, emotional and intellectual space for these opportunities where time is given for individual reflection and exploration and for community expression on the essence of being human - humanness. (UWE website)

This embedded chaplaincy speaks an artificially created neutral language in the liberal saeculum. At the same time this model also has deep roots in the chaplaincy tradition reaching back to a situation of religious establishment and before the professionalisation of education welfare functions. In the “establishment” phase of plurality as described in Schema 1) above, Christian chaplains might indeed be the sole agents of a variety of welfare services within an institution. Whilst this model has its own merits, like all the others it is redolent with the ambiguity of the situation: on the one hand it appears to represent a chaplaincy domesticated by a secular liberal establishment, but on the other it marks a reclaiming of territory and a pastoral theology of wholeness. The experiment did not last and at the time of writing the future of chaplaincy in UWE is very unclear.

“Workplace Chaplaincy” as a model of HE chaplaincy has also been placed within this quadrant. It represents an embedded chaplaincy in that it is predicated on the kind of access

and support from the institution which is necessary to work freely in and amongst its staff. The model can also of course be inclusive of students who are similarly supported as those whose task within this workplace is one of study. Workplace chaplaincy ministers to people in that part of their lives which is spent at work. It is a pastoral model which seeks to replicate the vision of universal geographical cover of places of residence through the parish system with a parallel, though inevitably incomplete pastoral cover for people in the workplace.

A very recent development of HE chaplaincy within the Anglican Diocese of Liverpool has been to appoint two chaplains to cover Liverpool University and John Moores University but with an unusual division of responsibilities. One of the chaplains focuses on work with students – in particular developing Christian community (we will return to this under the Student Christian Work Model), whereas the other offers a classic workplace chaplaincy model of “pastoral care and support for members of staff of all faiths and none” (Liverpool Anglican University Chaplaincy website).

The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Team is difficult to locate within the schema as the composition of a chaplaincy team in terms of the faiths represented is not in itself indicative of that team lying within any one of the quadrants. Indeed one of the features of the landscape revealed by using this particular schema is that which faiths are represented within an HE chaplaincy is actually not as significant for understanding the chaplaincy’s role as might at first appear. I have placed the “Multi-Faith Chaplaincy” on the boundaries of the first quadrant as it typically contains a combination of one lead chaplain (almost always Christian and typically Anglican) who is reasonably embedded in the institution but working with a variety of faith advisers or volunteer chaplains with much looser ties to the HEI (Clines 2008).

A brief overview of responses in the embedded-pastoral quadrant indicates that useful though the schema is, it reveals considerable ambiguity overall in the models being used.

b) The Embedded-Public Chaplaincy

We can now look at some of the responses which are available to an embedded HE chaplaincy which operates on a model of public engagement within a pluralist saeculum. The primary response here is one which can be characterised as the “Religious Affairs Office”. This chaplaincy operates in an embedded way as a department or service within the HEI. It takes responsibility for “religious” issues in the university and is responsive to the priorities and purposes of the institution. The institution in turn recognises not just the expertise which the chaplaincy represents but the value and importance of the faith traditions and communities which are part of the university community. A modified liberal secularism may prevail as the dominant modality of the institution but there is recognition that other modalities are present and necessary for the institution to be truly open and plural.

This chaplaincy seeks to fully support individual pastoral and spiritual needs, but it also actively engages with the institution in its agendas of diversity and equality, in its internal conversation about values and purposes and as an advocate and representative voice for the communities of faith present. The chaplaincy would seek to build bridges between the university and local or national faith communities and might also support teaching/learning and research by facilitating knowledge transfer between the university and faith communities.

Such a model requires continuous negotiation – probably not of the formal terms of the chaplaincy’s presence in the institution – but in recognition that this shared plural space is one in which dialogues and conversations are the normal process of community and essential to its life. Faithful witness in the embedded public chaplaincy will require the kind of inter-disciplinary and inter-faith wisdom in the university so eloquently described by David Ford in his discussion of *Christian Wisdom* (2007). The ability to make chaplaincy a process of negotiation is particularly important to the embedded-public chaplaincy as it is otherwise in danger of making the faith communities a mere client of the university.

The Prophetic Chaplaincy has also been placed in this quadrant – though like the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy this model can be distributed across the schema in a number of ways. Most chaplaincies would wish to claim that the prophetic ministry is part of their role, generally through engagement with social justice issues. To confine the Prophetic Chaplaincy to engagement with universal concerns for justice can, however, be a weakening of that prophetic voice. Broad social justice agendas which are external to HE can easily be absorbed within the pastoral engagement of the liberal saeculum – focusing on recruiting individuals to causes.

The prophetic role which is envisaged here is one exercised by an embedded chaplain speaking truth to the institution in which they serve, and truth to the Church based on the insights received in faithful witness to the HEI. Closely connected to this role would be the work done in particular by the Church of England's Board of Education in responding to government policy initiatives. In the current climate of financial restructuring and rapidly changing policy this Prophetic Chaplaincy role of offering theological commentary on the individual institution and the wider sector may well become more significant. Simply engaging with a broad base of social justice issues within which the Church is called to witness at all time and in all places, would not be sufficient to meet the criteria of Prophetic Chaplaincy. The specific task of HE chaplaincy is to provide faithful witness *in this place*, when this place is found within the HE sector. An example of bearing this prophetic witness into the life of the Church from the life of the sector might perhaps be the polytechnic chaplains' report *Going Public* (NSCP 1985).

c) The Detached-Public Chaplaincy

The Detached Public Chaplaincy is something of an anomaly as it is difficult to offer a truly public engagement without entering the public realm in some acknowledged or recognised

way. Nevertheless elements of this do exist within the sector. It is a situation which arises when the agendas and understanding of the institution and the chaplaincy are divided between the liberal saeculum and the pluralist saeculum. This can perhaps be seen most clearly in the example of UCL, whose history has already proved so revealing in understanding the developing relationship of secularity and plurality. UCL lays great emphasis on its narrowly focussed secularism and offers only a minimal recognition to its chaplaincy. Faith within the institution is seen as voluntaristic and expressed through the life of student faith societies which are wholly independent of the College structure. Within this structure two “Equality Champions” represent “Race, Religion and Belief” on the College Council (UCL Website – Human Resources) The Anglican Chaplaincy is detached, being based at a local church and therefore operates largely on the Student Christian Work model discussed below. Nevertheless the chaplaincy has sought to establish an Ambassadorial role towards the College.

The dangers of this radical privatisation of faith within the institution were revealed following the well publicised arrest of a former president of the UCL Islamic Society on terrorist charges. A report into the situation commissioned by UCL (Caldicott 2010) revealed the lack of understanding and disconnection between the institution and the vigorous religious life amongst College students. The absence of a recognised chaplaincy received little attention in the report and the conclusions are mainly concerned with the need to improve formal processes and record keeping. A single paragraph acknowledges that UCL may need to reconsider the nature of its secularity and this is followed by a recommendation:

that UCL review its understanding of ‘secularity’ in the context of the university’s traditions and principles and against a background of increasing recognition within UK higher education of the need to develop an improved understanding of the language used to deal with faith. (Caldicott 2010: 23)

The recognition appears almost reluctant, and within it we can see the limitations for a chaplaincy seeking to exercise a public ministry towards liberal secular institution. A similar situation is found at the University of Westminster which has employed an Interfaith Adviser

supported by a series of Volunteer Faith Advisers and Assistants – some of whom are in fact paid by their own faith communities. The Volunteer Faith Advisers have considerable freedom to operate within the civic and voluntary space of the university but no real access to the truly public life of the university.

Possible models of chaplaincy within this quadrant would be the Ambassadorial – seeking to make representations and establish communication, or perhaps a chaplaincy based around models of an external consultancy to the HEI. To some extent these are theoretical constructs as it is unusual to find a chaplaincy primarily located within this quadrant.

d) The Detached-Pastoral Chaplaincy

In contrast to Quadrant c) which is a largely theoretical area, Quadrant d) is well populated though not all the agencies in this sector would want to adopt the title of “chaplaincy”. I have described this as the “Student Christian Work” model, and it is a model which we have seen to be historically significant and in particular connected with the denominationalism. As some denominations move responsibility for chaplaincy work from central towards local levels of church organisation Student Workers seem to be replacing chaplains in some cases. Student Work rarely has or seeks any formal recognition from the institution - the focus is on students. Activity may take place largely off campus but there is often a direct link to the Christian Union or other student society, emphasizing the voluntarist nature of this form of engagement. There is often little interest in engagement with university staff other than avowedly Christian staff.

Roman Catholic chaplaincies often show many features of the Student Christian Work Model, but are always more complex than this, having varying degrees of engagement with the HEI and with other recognised chaplains. Normally there is at least some formal acknowledgement of the Catholic chaplaincy by the institutions and frequently this means

recognition within an ecumenical or multi-faith team. In some cases, however, work tends to focus on Roman Catholic students and staff. The most recent Roman Catholic report on HE chaplaincy acknowledges this issue but argues that a true ecumenism should be expressed by a diversity of responses within the ecumenical team and the building of “a shared space within which all can authentically be themselves, but with mutual friendship, mutual respect and a willingness to learn from each other” (McGrail and Sullivan 2007: 54). The default position of full time Anglican chaplains adopting the role of co-ordinating chaplain is also critiqued as an imposition by the institution of a departmental and line management structures on chaplaincies which are essentially pluralist teams (McGrail and Sullivan 2007: 55).

Clearly this particular perspective is more pluralist than liberal in the sense that it focuses on a diversity of communities rather than a diversity of individuals. The Roman Catholic tradition represents a unique model in which the chaplaincy can operate equally well in various places along the embedded-detached axis. Whilst the Roman Catholic chaplaincy may appear on the surface to be rooted in pastoral engagement and a Student Christian Work Model, its underlying theological dynamic can be quite different.

Interim Conclusions – Beginning to Understand the Secular, Inter-Faith and Christian University

The search for a coherent narrative for HE Chaplaincy has been a fruitful one. It has framed a discussion about the relationship of secularism to diversity and the way in which this relationship has generated patterns with the capacity to reproduce themselves in different circumstances. Development has not been purely linear – new forms continually overlie older ones which remain a vital part of the matrix of relationships between faith, university and society. The relationship between the Church and a secularised public square is far from one

sided and the present state of affairs owes as much to an internal Christian concern with a more diverse public space as it does to a more narrowly secular dynamic. At times the relationship between the secular liberal settlement and the Christian theologies which emerged parallel to it appears to be symbiotic.

The historical sketch has also shown some of the critical moves which occurred as the secular university emerged from the Christian Establishment whilst continuing to be shaped and formed by a distinctively Christian heritage. Looking at the recent history of development and policy we have seen the emergence of a new inter-faith diversity as significant for the modern university. That diversity has initially been held within an extended understanding of the denominational-ecumenical diversity, but it is increasingly apparent that this situation is unlikely to hold. It is time to speak of a university in which all these differing forms of modernity are recognised. Such a university would be a shared and continually negotiated space and it is for this university that we need to articulate a contextualised theology of chaplaincy.

The discussion has repeatedly pointed to the need for a coherent theological narrative of chaplaincy in Higher Education. In order to carry this narrative forward it is now necessary to give attention to the theology of the university and to broaden the discussion which has already been hinted at in the analysis of policy and history.

Four key theological themes have emerged from the discussion so far.

Firstly, the need for a theology which gives a positive account of secular space. The secular space cannot be adequately described in negative terms as an absence of religion or in neutral terms as a level playing field in which all beliefs share equally. Christians have been actively engaged in creating secularity as a space in which the internal dialogue of Christian diversity can be worked out. A positive account of God's purpose in and through secularism must be given. Without such an account it will not be possible to find that elusive coherent narrative

for chaplaincy in HEIs or any other part of the secular space. Our theological discussion will need to consider the task of the Church not just in constituting itself as Church but also in making the world become itself as the saeculum.

Secondly, diversity has been recognised as a central feature of the contemporary public life and a major concern for HE chaplaincy. Diversity in the HEI is linked to a history in which Christian denominationalism and ecumenism played a significant part. Our theology of HE chaplaincy must therefore provide an adequate account of the way in which revised forms of secularity engage with multiple expressions of belief within the university. The literature around inter-faith theology is extensive, and it is not the purpose of this thesis to either provide an extensive survey, or to enter fully into what is a specialist field. Rather than seek an understanding of this diversity primarily through a discussion of Christianity in a world of many faiths, I will suggest that the resources we need to respond to this diversity can be found firstly within an understanding of the secular as a necessarily diverse space and time, and secondly within an understanding of diversity as otherness which can be found in the theology of Michael Barnes and which will lead us towards an ethic of hospitality.

Thirdly, a link has been made between HE chaplaincy and epistemology. If the university is an institution whose purposes centre on the extension, critique and distribution of knowledge then for chaplaincy to meaningfully engage with these institutions it must in some way express a distinctively Christian understanding of knowledge and learning for the university. If HE chaplaincy is to fulfil its calling to faithful witness in the university it cannot be confined to agendas concerned solely with the individual and pastoral support of the university community. Or perhaps more accurately, the way in which Christian chaplaincy is conducted, including its pastoral work, must be such that it bears witness to a distinctive Christian understanding of the core purposes of the university. What appears to be a very grand claim for the role of HE chaplaincy may actually be worked out through very humble actions.

Finally, we need to look for theologies of the university and the kind of chaplaincy which might result from these understanding. If our theology of the secular recognises the validity and significance of secular space and time within God's purposes, we need to build a positive understanding of how the Church can be present in and to the secular university and chaplaincy plays a vital role in developing this understanding. We also need some vision for the purpose and goal of the secular university if we are to call upon the institution to be true to itself. I will of course focus on the role of chaplaincy though I do not mean at any point to suggest that this is the only or even the most significant form of Christian presence in the secular university. To do so would be to seriously neglect the contribution of the countless individual Christians who make their careers or study within the secular HEI.

Chapter 3: Chaplaincy in the Secular HEI – a Contextual Theology

This chapter seeks to draw together the various threads of the argument so far. My purpose is to understand chaplaincy in the secular HEI beginning from its context rather than from a generic theology of chaplaincy or of ministry. This purpose has led me through the analysis of government and church policy towards religion in the HEI, to construct a narrative for the historical development of HE chaplaincy and to offer a typology of chaplaincy responses to the current situation of the secular and religiously diverse university. The four themes with which the previous chapter ended (a positive secularism, understanding diversity, the theology of knowledge and the theology of the university) are of course interrelated and I will seek to draw them together under two main headings.

Firstly, I will look for an understanding of diversity as an essential feature of life within the secular age and argue that the theological nature of secularity as a shared space and time challenges the way in which a dichotomy between the public and private has been used to define the role of religion within modernity.

Secondly, looking more closely at some recent theologies of the university will provide material for a theology of learning and knowledge. In the final section of this chapter I will offer a model for HE chaplaincy through three binary concepts: Dialogue-Negotiation, Host-Guest, Translation-Narration.

A Positive Secularism

In the previous two chapters I have examined the context for chaplaincy in the secular HEI today and found that the tension in the relationship of faith to the public square in the secular HEI makes chaplaincy in many ways an ambiguous “absent presence”. The emergence of a

public space shaped by diversity of belief has been fundamental to the developing story of chaplaincy in the HEI. Within the university this developing diversity has been closely linked to the emergence of secular institutions in which religion becomes a category differentiated from the public life of the institution. This differentiation is built on a withdrawal of faith into the private realm and leads to forms of religious life in the university which are primarily voluntaristic with religion understood as a personal choice.

The recovery of a positive theology of the secular is therefore an important project for grounding chaplaincy in secular institutions. Here I wish to offer two arguments – firstly, that the dichotomy of public and private has little meaning in a theology of the secular. Secondly, the primary theological metaphor for the secular is of a differentiated time rather than a differentiation of religious and non-religious space. From these two arguments it follows that the secular age is necessarily a plural age and that the daily stuff of pastoral action in a chaplaincy has a much wider and more public significance as a form of faithful Christian witness.

1) Casanova and Weintraub – Public and Private Spaces

Despite the historic move towards the privatisation of religion, HE chaplaincy remains a public religious presence in that it is frequently recognised and embedded within secular institutions. Indeed the majority of secular HEIs in Britain today have no academic department devoted to the study of religions and the chaplaincy is the only form of religious presence which is formally acknowledged within the structure of the university.¹⁰ Yet chaplaincy in HEIs frequently operates within a tacit acceptance of this private-public distinction seeing its action and witness as located in the realms of the private and voluntarised. My argument here is that chaplaincy is a form of public religion appropriate for diverse secular institutions because

¹⁰ See Introduction p.13

it is a religious presence which goes beyond the public-private differentiation. The presence of chaplaincy neither contradicts nor conflicts with that differentiation of the secular university from its historic religious origins, but represents something other in conversation with and within the secular institution. For chaplaincy to be a faithful witness in the secular HEI it must therefore show how it is not confined to the forms of privatised religion.

I have frequently used the term “public” in this study without offering any definition of this public space, or considering how the “public” might be related to its antonym “private”. This public-private distinction is, however, essential to understanding the nature of secularity, the secular university and the role of HE chaplaincy. To have an understanding of the public space is necessarily to differentiate this from a contrasted private space.

José Casanova has sought to reframe the theory of secularisation by separating the empirical and historical phenomenon of increasing differentiation between secular and religious institutions from the presumption of an increasingly privatised religion. In doing so he brings into question the way in which liberal politics has used the public-private dichotomy to define the limits of religion (Casanova 1994: 39).

Casanova’s argument is that the core process of secularisation is the differentiation between a secular and a religious sphere with the emergence of a secular state and institutions. He distinguishes this process of differentiation very clearly from the two other strands of most secularisation theory – the privatisation of religion and the decline of religious practice (Casanova 1994: 19-20, 211). Casanova’s analysis of these three strands of social secularisation theory means that in his model it is entirely consistent for religions to engage in a public way within a society which is secular through its separation of the religious and secular spheres. For Casanova this public engagement of religion will take place primarily within the civil space as a critique of the values and failures of modernity in its various institutionalised forms. This critique is neither anti-modern - seeking to roll back modernity to some earlier form of society in which religion is fully embodied in social forms, nor is it post-

modern - for it is based on a consistent understanding of the common good or wider universal truths rather than a fragmented spirituality (Casanova 1994: 221).

At times this public form of religion is presented by Casanova as agonistic or conflictual with parts of secular society, at times it is in a dialogical relationship; but through this dialogue it emerges as critique, alternative and counterpoint. Casanova concludes that religion has the potential to help modernity save itself through the critique which it is able to offer (Casanova 1994:234).

In distinguishing the public and private, Casanova draws heavily on the work of Jeff Weintraub (1997) who points to the ambiguities and complexities in using this distinction at all.

Weintraub argues that whilst public and private function as opposites and descriptors in a number of useful ways their diversity of meanings and usages is too complex for there to be simple dichotomy between them. That which in one legitimate usage is private can equally well be considered public in a different schema (Weintraub 1997: 7). For Weintraub the public-private dichotomy is a family of inter-related pairings which can only be understood within specific contexts and is not therefore useful as a broad category.

The discussion of secularism and the public-private dichotomy by Casanova and Weintraub therefore offers a limited public role for religion within the civil space of the secular society. In practice we can see something of this role being adopted by the Church of England in its efforts to commend the continuing value of the tradition of formation and community in HE as a counter argument to the more instrumental government policies. The Cathedrals Group of Church Foundation HEIs has sought to formulate this critique in terms of values, a recent report stating a key message that:

These [Christian] values contrast strongly with a vision of the future of HE which is market-focused, with the student as consumer, and a less central focus on the wider purposes of universities. (Wooldridge and Newcome 2011: 1)

The move from a discourse of rights towards one of shared values is something which we have already seen in the analysis of government documents, and I have suggested that this represents a shift away from the traditional secular liberal politics of the rights bearing individual. The language of values seems to enable the kind of critique of government HE policy by the Churches which Cassanova might envisage. Such an argument by the Churches is essentially an engagement on the basis of the Common Good – a place where common ground can be found between the goods sought by different ethical traditions. A dialogue around shared values, however, assumes that a process of translation into a common public ethical language is both possible and desirable – and this is a presumption which I want to question. The real significance of the Cathedrals Group may well be not that it enables a discourse of shared values to take place within HE, but rather that distinctively Christian forms of the university are narratives of the Christian story within the HE sector. This is not an argument that the public engagement of the Church within HE can only be through the Christian University (an idea which will prove to have its own ambiguities), but that the model of narration rather than translation is increasingly the more appropriate form of presence for chaplaincy within the secular HEI.

Perhaps the most profound theological argument against the public-private dichotomy is that offered by Hauerwas and Willimon (1989) in their reassessment of culture and ministry. For these authors, the Church's mission is simply to be the Church – a community which responds to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Within this community we are formed as people who can live in true discipleship as followers of Jesus. Liturgy, Christian learning, social care and pastoral action are all part of this process of formation. For Hauerwas and Willimon pastoral action even in the "little things" is all about our orientation towards God and therefore part of the public and political mission of Jesus (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 139). The notion that the Christian faith can be "private" is just one of the ways in which our world seeks to subvert and ignore Christianity (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 152).

The argument offered by Hauerwas and Willimon makes a powerful link between the ordinary pastoral and liturgical “stuff” of chaplaincy work and the public life of the institution. It is an argument for what can be described as the narrative chaplaincy – in which the Christian story is told through its day to day form of life. For conventional secularism this day to day stuff of chaplaincy belongs firmly in the sphere of the private. From a theological perspective, however, it is not just that this activity enables a wider role to take place, but rather that it constitutes an alternative model, builds community and tells a coherent story. Liturgy and pastoral care are not practices in the private lives of Christians but part of the very fabric of what constitutes the people of God as we respond to the call of God. This is a model in which public and private are simply not used as a dichotomy to define and confine the proper role for religious life because the whole of life is formative and takes place as a response to God.

This study is concerned with HE chaplaincy as a public form of witness within the secular university. An interesting possibility now emerges – that in order to speak meaningfully and accurately about this public witness we have to move beyond the language of public and private. That which appears to be an action within the private or voluntary sphere emerges as having public import in the life of the university.

2) Taylor and Markus – Secular Time

Casanova and Weintraub differentiate the religious and secular primarily through a metaphor of separated spaces which occur during the same time for the religious and non-religious, the public and private. The authors considered in this section, however, are primarily concerned with differentiating a secular time within the same space.

a) Charles Taylor and the Secular Age

Taylor's *A Secular Age* (2007) is a survey of the development of Western secularism of almost epic proportions. Behind it lies a question about the definition of the secular itself. Taylor suggests that secularity is generally given two meanings - as the separation of religion from public institutions and the public space, or as the decline of religious belief. These two ways into describing the secular are already familiar from the discussion of Casanova's work. In contrast to these definitions, however, Taylor suggests a third meaning – that of secularism as a historical shift in the conditions of belief. He asks how modernity has made it possible to live solely for human flourishing without any reverence towards an external object:

“a secular age” is one in which the eclipse of all goals beyond human flourishing becomes conceivable; or better it falls within the range of imaginable life for masses of people. (Taylor 2007: 19-20)

For Taylor, the incarnational faith of the Middle Ages in which the sacred was fully embodied in society began to break down at the Reformation. This began a process of “disenchantment” in which the sacred, once inextricably woven into the fabric of life and of the world, becomes separated and belief is problematised. This disenchantment leads to what Taylor describes as the “nova effect” in which a proliferation of new positions became possible from the Enlightenment onwards. With the established order of society no longer underpinned by an eternal order, social roles and loyalties can no longer be assumed as given. What follows is described as the “Age of Mobilization” in which it is necessary to mobilise people into identities such as denomination and nationality on the basis of a voluntary choice. Taylor charts the Age of Mobilization from roughly 1800 to 1950.

Beyond the Age of Mobilization comes the Age of Authenticity in which connection to the sacred is only possible if this is a choice which speaks to me as an individual and in which there is no necessary connection between the sacred and the political order. Taylor's

complex analysis of these historical developments therefore has similarities to the much simpler schema I have offered for the history of HE chaplaincy as Establishment, Denominationalism, Ecumenism and Multi-Faith.

Whilst Taylor's account has a clear directional narrative, the story he tells is by no means unilinear. At each stage of the narrative we can see how elements from "earlier" stages of the story remain and re-emerge. So for example the arrival of modernity and urbanisation also produces new forms of religiosity and enchantment through Methodism and the pietist revival. On the other hand, contemporary forms of religion – including reformed expressions of both Protestantism and Catholicism can be remarkably "disenchanted". At the same time Taylor sees the ways in which some forms of secularity remain open to transcendence and modernity making both "closed" and "open" world views available to us today whether we are religious or secular in outlook. Religiosity and enchantment, secularity and disenchantment are not simply linked but intertwined in a complex relationship.

Taylor launches a powerful critique of what he calls the "subtraction argument" – the account of modernity and science gradually stripping away the religious narrative to leave a natural and morally self standing humanity exposed. Modernity is not simply the subtraction of an old order to reveal which is beneath, but involves significant new creations. Many of the ethical developments which define modernity with its focus on the rights bearing individual (eg. the abolition of slavery and other social reforms) turn out to have been largely driven by women and men whose motivation was robustly religious. The effect of this critique of the subtraction argument is to show that the relationship between secular modernity and social religiosity is complex and secularism cannot claim to stand alone – it is shaped by and continues to interact with faith based ways of life. In this way Taylor seeks to expose and undermine the often held presumption of secular modernity that it is somehow a natural or default position against which other positions are to be measured.

Taylor's account of the secular age offers a coherent narrative in which the stages of development do not so much replace as overlay each other. He emphasises the constant interchange between what he would describe as secular and religious imaginaries, the many "cross currents" which exist and the potential for secularism to remain open to transcendence. The overall effect of Taylor's argument is to destabilise the apparently solid secularism of late modernity. He offers us instead a picture of a secularism which both holds within itself and exists alongside other social forms which were more prominent in the past - a secular age which can remain open to transcendence whilst remaining true to itself.

Taylor's account focuses on Christian theism and in particular Catholicism. He has been criticised for being Western-centric (Hent de Vries 2010: 396) and Christian-centric (Kerr 2010), giving an insufficient account of the global diversity of faith and history. Taylor does not discuss and does not seem to recognise the major impact on Western secularism of the significant presence of World Faiths other than Christianity and Judaism. This is problematic precisely because these faith groups are present in Western society through recent migration and therefore do not share the history which Taylor describes. Communities of faith which have primarily experienced Western secularity through the history of colonialism bring something quite different to the situation and it is unfortunate that Taylor's historical account seems to stop short of this new encounter. In contrast to this, recent HE policy towards the presence of faith in the sector seems to have been driven by secular responses to the new religious diversity – but behind these responses lie presumptions about the nature of religious diversity which are at least in part informed by the experience of Christian diversity as ecumenism.

b) Markus and Matthews – Augustine and the Secular Age

Robert Markus' discussion of secularity has focused on his study of Augustine in whom he finds the first mature expression of a theology of the secular age. For Augustine the secular is a time rather than a divided space. The present secular age is the penultimate one before the eschaton. During this period Augustine's earthly and heavenly cities will be "inextricably intertwined" (Markus 2006: 39) and it is this state of affairs which characterises the secular age. The secular corresponds roughly to that which Christians and non-Christians share (Markus 2006: 6) and is not a no-man's land between the two cities, but rather the sharing of their temporal life (Markus 1988: 71). All of this means that "Christian tradition has a legitimate place for the autonomy of the secular" (Markus 2006: 9). This legitimacy is, however, limited by time and although the present age (*αἰὼν*) to which the New Testament bears witness has a legitimacy now because it stands under the Lordship of Christ, this age and its authority will disappear in the age to come (Markus 1988: 14).

This Augustinian theology of the *saeculum* as essentially a legitimate time which is shared by the Christian and non-Christian enables us to build on Taylor's more philosophical and historical analysis. A secular age is of necessity a plural age, it is shared time and this sharing of time has a divine legitimacy. Christians do not know when or how the secular age will become the eschaton, nor do we know with any certainty what features of the diverse secular age will be included, excluded or transformed in order for the secular age to give way to the eschaton. This suggests a certain attitude of openness is required in the secular age – we must navigate and negotiate its diversity without fully knowing the *telos* into which it is being transformed.

If we take secularity in the way that Markus has interpreted Augustine then the secular university has a theologically legitimate role and we should not be surprised to find that Christian thought had a major influence on the creation of these institutions in the UK. A secular university on this reading would not be plural by accident or even as a response to an increasingly diverse society – rather it would have a responsibility to be plural. As part of the

earthly city the goals and purposes of the secular university would be penultimate rather than ultimate ones (Markus 1988: 68-69), but these could and should be goals which the Christian can share and support.

In considering the secular as a differentiation in space I argued that there is a role for HE chaplaincy to go beyond the public-private dichotomy and become a narrator of Christianity in and through the ordinary “stuff” of chaplaincy which has been all too easily misunderstood as action in the private sphere. Although such a dialogue takes place in and through the ordinary, in order to be meaningful it must nevertheless articulate a Christian account of the university. The chaplain’s presence must not be accidental but intentional. One way in which this could happen is through modelling forms of diverse life in the relationships within the multi-faith chaplaincy as well as between the chaplaincy and the university. Through these relationships the chaplaincy can seek to hold the university to its own responsibilities as a secular institution in which there are true plural forms of life. In keeping with the chaplaincy’s calling to be a narrator rather than a translator of the Christian story within the university I want to look for ways to frame the multi-faith life of the chaplaincy which go beyond the model of dialogue which is currently being promoted by the secular HEI.

In analysing sector and government policy documents relating to religion in HEIs, I have suggested that we are presented with an increasingly thin account of religious diversity which all too readily becomes reduced to managerialism. In this managerialism religious diversity is only significant for the ways that it impacts on the organisational life of the institution. Fully articulated accounts of the diversity of the community are not possible where conversation around differing visions of the good are being excluded to preserve the supposed neutrality of the public space. Even within the most secular of institutions a chaplaincy, however, is still held to be a space within which the language of values and purposes will be articulated. The chaplaincy is allowed at least a little latitude to be something other than the university – though probably on the basis that this aspect of its work is seen as part of the private sphere

of individual voluntary action and primarily in the pursuit of a shared public discourse in a common language. In short, so long as chaplaincy activity is presumed to belong to the realm of the social and pastoral the secular institution will allow it to be a location for the discussion of values and purposes. I have, however, argued that this distinction of public and private means little when seen from the perspective of Christian mission. The chaplaincy which is excluded from the formal public life of the university simply becomes a Trojan horse in which the public witness of Christianity is continued by other means. Such a chaplaincy may well be faced with the task of calling upon its institution to be truly and fully secular by acknowledging the shared nature of the space and time which the HEI occupies. The chaplaincy in the secular HEI does not seek the conversion of the secular to the Christian but rather to witness to God's purposes for the secular.

Charles Matthews has argued that at its worst secularism is unable to truly recognise the real nature of otherness leading to a "structural inability to imagine us crossing the boundaries isolating each of us" (Matthews 2007: 114). The kind of secular political liberalism articulated supremely by John Rawls (1999) risks falling into just such an inability to truly cross boundaries when it argues that a shared neutral language of public reason should dominate public space. Matthews like Markus, turns to Augustine's theology and finds here an account of the self as essentially dialogical – as a conversation generated in encounter with the otherness of God. This encounter as a dialogue through which the understanding of the other is deepened becomes for Matthews the model not just for responding to the plurality of faiths but also for apologetics in the plural age (Matthew 2007: 116-117). It is within these conversations of plurality and apologetics that I want to locate a theology of chaplaincy for the secular university.

3) A Positive Secularism – Conclusions

The secular HEI has a rightful place within the secular age. Whether we speak primarily in terms of a shared secular space or in the more theologically precise terms of a shared secular time, it is possible to offer a robust theology for the autonomous and diverse secular university whilst retaining a place for a distinctive Christian witness within it. The history which revealed a significant and self aware Christian involvement in the creation of the British secular HEI was one of Christians in search of new forms to contain their increasing diversity. This history was not an aberration and we need to find in our own time new ways for expressing Christian commitment to the secular institution. The beginning of an answer is emerging to my original question of how the HE chaplaincy can be a form of faithful public witness within the secular HEI. We might tentatively describe that answer as being a chaplaincy which in and through the ordinary stuff of its actions represents a Christian wisdom in conversation with the secular institution. This chaplaincy will seek to negotiate the secular landscape of the university open to insights and alliances which reveal God's purposes within it.

The next stage of the argument will be to look at some recent theologies of the university (and therefore of the knowledge it represents) to see how these can help to further develop our understanding of HE chaplaincy.

A Christian Understanding of the University

At the beginning of this study I wrote of three absences for chaplaincy – from formal policy concerning religion in the university, the absence of chaplaincy from itself in its lack of a coherent narrative, and finally the absence of chaplaincy from the theology of the university. It is now time to address this third absence. Several of the authors considered here are deeply concerned about the separation of theology in the academy from the life of the Christian community, yet surprisingly they do not consider the connecting role that chaplaincy

might play as the formal presence of the Christian community in the academy. Nor do they consider the theological significance of the continued presence and strength of chaplaincy in HEIs which do not have any focus for teaching or research in either theology or religious studies. It is difficult to establish the reasons for an absence, but I will suggest that we should look towards one factor in particular – the presumption of a public-private dichotomy in the secular HEI with the work of HE chaplaincy firmly located in the private sphere. I am suggesting that chaplaincies themselves have frequently been too content to frame their work within this dichotomy and need to change their self understanding if they are to be true to their calling of faithful and public witness within the university. Several of the authors considered here argue for a university returning towards its Christian roots as a place in which pursuit of knowledge and personal formation are united with instrumental goals of producing engaged, economically active citizens. An absence of reflection on the place of chaplaincy may therefore suggest that this project has not yet been fully extended to the whole life of the university and remains influenced by the Enlightenment ideal of detached knowledge.

There is a second possible factor which I do not propose to investigate as it would require a wholly different approach and methodology. The British university has historically operated with a very clear distinction between academic and non-academic staff and functions. There are good reasons at work here as well as historical precedents – academic appointments require different conditions, rights and responsibilities within the university structure. Academic life is the very heart of what a university is and is for. Chaplaincy is not and should not pretend to be part of the academic structure, but if it does not have a significant engagement with academic life then it will have fallen into the trap of the public-private dichotomy and no longer be exercising a ministry which is relevant to the core purpose of the university. With university chaplaincies most commonly located within Student Services Departments it is understandable that those who are primarily writing for and about the academic community would not give due attention to the presence of chaplaincy. This location of chaplaincy as part of a department primarily concerned with student well being is

itself symptomatic of the managerial account of religion in the university in which religion is located in the “private” lives of students. It is also indicative of the separation of knowledge and formation within the modern secular university. The initial responsibility for providing a theological account of chaplaincy in the university must therefore rest with those of us who minister within the chaplaincy sector.

With this in mind I want to look at a number of theologies of the university which have recently been offered. In considering these theologies of the university I am asking what kind of space is the secular university, with what kind of knowledge is it concerned and what is the place of the Christian community within it especially as it is expressed through chaplaincy?

1) David Ford and Mike Higton – Dialogical Wisdom

David Ford finds himself an academic theologian within “the modern university as it struggles to interrelate very diverse methods of understanding and arriving at knowledge” (Ford 2007:75). His vision is of a theology of wisdom which loves God for God’s sake (Ford 2007:225) and is unafraid to interweave pre-modern, modern and late modern discourses in an effort to “make reason deep” (Ford 2007:299). This leads him to argue for a theology which is continually engaged in inter-disciplinary conversations in what may appear to be an *ad hoc* way, but is in fact grounded in “the wisdom of negotiation” (Ford 2007:340) and the “pedagogy of wisdom” which he finds in Job (Ford 2007:93), whilst guided by a need to operate for the public good.

Ford’s understanding of Wisdom stands in contrast to narrowly propositional forms of knowledge which have come to have a dominant place in the life of the modern secular university. In contrast to the indicative nature of propositional knowledge Ford uses the metaphor of grammatical moods to describe the nature of Wisdom. Wisdom is more than indicative – it is also imperative in its ethical demands, interrogative in its seeking, subjunctive

in its openness to surprise, optative in its desiring (Ford 2007: 45-50). Oddly Ford omits the vocative mood which could well be added as the voice of liturgy in which Wisdom “calls on the name of the Lord”.

Ford uses this theology of Wisdom in dialogue to offer a vision for the revitalisation of the modern university which recaptures the three key purposes of the medieval university:

- Understanding and truth for their own sake
- Formation into a way of life
- Utility to society

Formation and knowledge for its own sake are of genuine utility to society when seen from a long term perspective. The discursive nature of knowledge and the recognition of real plurality rather than false neutrality mean that:

...the ideal university in the present state of our complexly ‘religious and secular’ world might be described as ‘inter-faith and secular’, a campus where there is shared ground among those of many faiths and none. (Ford 2007: 288).

It is the nature of knowledge as a conversation which necessitates this plurality.

As knowledge inheres primarily in people not in LRCs, Ford’s vision of the university is strongly collegial with formation and the apprenticeship of skills across generations very firmly on the agenda. Ideally such an institution will be independent and self governing as this is the form in which it can best fulfil its functions both for the its own life and for the common good. Ford’s understanding of the nature of theology leads to a vision of the university which revitalises some major themes from the past – themes which originally, and still today, have their roots in Christian theology.

In December 2011 David Ford gave a paper to a conference at the Cardiff Centre for Chaplaincy Studies in which he offered a manifesto for chaplaincy in a multi-faith context. Ford stresses the significance of (academic) theology for chaplaincy – but primarily in training. He brings his dialogical theology of Wisdom to bear by asking for a fourfold deepening in

chaplaincy teams – “deeper into one’s own tradition, deeper into those of others, deeper into engagement with the institution and deeper into mutual understanding in the team” (Ford 2011: 14). Chaplaincies should be places of both disagreement and depth, they point to the importance of the faith communities in the public sphere and are to spread religious literacy. All of this should take place within their threefold remit of “worship (and other faith-specific practices), pastoral care, and raising questions of meaning, value and purpose within institutions” (Ford 2011: 14). Although very brief, this manifesto is an extremely valuable contribution to the literature. The manifesto points to some of the key features of chaplaincy in dialogue and negotiation which I will explore more fully at the end of this chapter.

Ford is writing here for chaplaincy generically and not specifically for the university chaplaincy. His brief manifesto gives a significant direction but leaves areas for development – particularly in understanding how the traditional threefold practices of worship, pastoral care and meaning-making locate the chaplaincy in the public sphere, of the kind of relationship which holds the chaplaincy partners together in dialogue and the meaning of dialogue itself. I shall return to these issues as I try to formulate some theological tools for understanding chaplaincy in the secular HEI.

Mike Higon has developed a theology of the university which contains many of the same themes as Ford’s but is more explicitly tied to understanding the secular university. Whilst we have Ford speaking of the “secular and inter-faith university”, Higon’s description is of a “secular and religiously plural university” (Higon 2012: 234). A short pamphlet (Higon 2006) and a brief article (Higon 2005) have already outlined what might be termed spirituality for higher education. In these sketches Higon opens themes of learning as vulnerability to truth, as desire and as sociability, and challenges the Church to learn from the university’s vulnerable humility before truth. All these themes are developed more fully in a much more substantial work on the *Theology of Higher Education* (2012). Here Higon describes vulnerable Christian learning as risk taking on the way of the cross (Higon 2012: 156). The

university is called to be “virtuous” because all learning is a matter of being formed in a discipline, and to be “good” because all learning should be orientated towards the common good. Sociability is essential to the life of the university as a series of ongoing conversations, and ultimately the nature of the university is to be a continually negotiated space. All of this negotiation, sociability and vulnerability leads to wisdom:

I have been arguing in effect, that university learning needs to be orientated towards wisdom – by which I have simply meant, towards arguments about the common good or creaturely flourishing. (Higton 2012: 237)

With Ford, Higton sees the emerging inter-faith wisdom found in scriptural reasoning as a model for sociable and vulnerable disagreements. Higton’s vision is unambiguously one for the secular university and of all the authors considered here, he is the one who pays most attention to the question of the public Christian witness within the secular institution:

I am not looking to re-found the Christian university, but to help secular and religiously plural universities take seriously their secular and religiously plural nature. (Higton 2012: 250)

Although it receives only quite a brief mention Higton does see the significance of chaplaincy for his argument. The subject is introduced through his discussion of Jenkins (2006) and Hardy (1996) and then returns briefly in the conclusion. Higton offers a theology of the secular university which does not require it to become Christian in order to be true to itself. Rather the aims to which the university are to be true are penultimate ones for the Christian – but to pursue this penultimate aim of true learning is to draw near to discipleship and worship. Chaplaincy calls the university to the good of true learning but in doing so also witnesses to the penultimate nature of that good – it is therefore necessary to the university’s thriving (Higton 2012: 256).

I have placed Ford and Higton together here in my analysis because of their shared emphases on wisdom, the common good and above all of university and learning as processes of dialogue and negotiation to which faith communities have a distinctive contribution to make. All of this is essential to support my argument for the negotiated nature of chaplaincy and its

relationship to the kind of theology of the university Ford and Highton represent. Although both Ford and Highton are committed to recalling the university to formation as one of its foundational purposes, neither carry through this project in ways which would break down the conventional distinction of curricular and extra-curricular with its sharp distinction of academic and non-academic functions. In Ford's vision the university is to be a dialogue of different traditions of knowledge, but one in which the secular Enlightenment tradition continues to predominate as *primus inter pares*. Highton perhaps takes the project further through his understandings of the sociability of reason and vulnerable learning. Whilst there is much concern in both authors over the fragmentation of knowledge into subject disciplines and the need re-establish an inter-disciplinary conversation, the fragmentation of the university's original purpose is seen primarily in terms of the curriculum. This may be to overlook a deeper and more fundamental fragmentation – that of the curricular from the extra-curricular, a division which allows formation to be separated from learning.

Both Highton and Ford are interested in forms of dialogue within the university. The thin account of religious diversity we have seen in the management structures of secular HEIs (an account critiqued by both Ford and Highton), however, supports a specific kind of dialogue which needs to be examined critically. A religious presence of competing student societies whose debates and choice of speakers frequently seem to require supervision or even intervention by the HEI and Students' Union can easily fit into the ideological secularist narrative of fractious religious groups which require management within a neutral public space. Dialogue is therefore promoted in support of a community cohesion agenda on the basis of the secularist account of religious differences as dangerously divisive. The chaplaincy is frequently recruited to this managerial agenda of dialogue. "Dialogue" is a concept and a methodology which must therefore be approached with care by HE chaplaincies. An encounter as dialogue does not necessarily form the kind of conversation between faith traditions in which there is a deep respect for the difference and otherness of those whom we meet there. Later in this chapter I want to develop the theme of critical dialogue and suggest

that the conversations in which chaplaincy engages are often better characterised as negotiation, whilst inter-faith relationships need to be considered as relationships of hospitality.

2) Gavin D'Costa and Stanley Hauerwas - Alternatives to the Secular University

In a dramatic image sweeping through his book *Theology in the Public Square*, D'Costa (2005) complains of the Babylonian captivity of theology in the university. His manifesto is clear from the outset:

Theology properly understood cannot be taught and practised within the modern university (D'Costa 2005:1)

For D'Costa a slow process beginning in the late Middle Ages and sealed by the foundation of the University of Berlin in 1810 led to theology losing its place as the unifying discipline of knowledge and becoming subject to the single methodology imposed by the Enlightenment. The end of this process is the reduction of modern theology to Religious Studies in which the detachment between the knowing subject and known object reduces plurality to mere cultural difference (D'Costa 2005:28). A situation has been reached in which for religion to be studied in the modern university the institution expects there to be a common external language allowing the description of these differences. For D'Costa the development of Religious Studies as an academic discipline is closely linked with a liberal secularist narrative.

D'Costa finds in Ford's theology an inability to deal with fundamental methodological differences between the disciplines. Indeed for D'Costa the opening of theology to critique from inter-disciplinary perspectives is bound to lead to it falling into precisely the trap that Ford wishes to climb out of – that of being subject to over arching Enlightenment norms of rationality (2005:73). More significantly D'Costa argues that Ford's distinction between the theology of the (ecumenical) Cambridge Federation of Theological Colleges and that taught in the university becomes a matter of the relationship of the college community to the faith community. For university theology departments detached from the faith communities the

relationship between academic theology and faith as a form of life becomes privatised to one between the individual student or academic and their own faith community (D'Costa 2005: 74). Theology has its own object of study and must be allowed its own methodology – and for D'Costa this means it must be given its own place in a Christian university with its own distinctive relationship to the Christian community. Anything less than this could not constitute a true plurality.

D'Costa's argument is that Ford does not recognise the full distinctiveness of theology and the significance of its relationship to a community of faith. He also suspects that Ford's version of inter-faith dialogue as modelling inter-disciplinary wisdom in the university amounts to an assumption that as a Christian theologian he can act as spokesperson for the other faith communities (D'Costa 2005: 74). It is true that Ford does presume that amongst the plural forms of discourse within and about the university, the tradition stemming from the European Enlightenment is one which predominates and becomes in effect an establishment within which the others operate. I would argue, however, that this is firstly a piece of realism by Ford – the situation he describes is simply the case in the university in the UK today. In my terms this is the place in which we are called to bear faithful public witness. Secondly, such a form of the university has its own legitimacy and its own authority as part of positive secularism which I have discussed above. Finally, I would draw attention again to the history of the university (and the history of developing secularity as described by Taylor). These histories suggest that the present form of the secular university did not come about simply by the subtraction of the religious from the earlier form of the institution leaving behind some differentiated secular essence of the university. The historical process shows the involvement of the Christian community in seeking to create a more religiously diverse form of institution. Even where the secular academic structure no longer provides a space for theology, the commitment of the Church to a sustained and theologically informed engagement with academic life can continue in the form of chaplaincy.

In this sense Ford's position is a legitimate continuation and outworking of that which began with the founding of UCL as a "secular" institution in which religious diversity could flourish. If Ford also appears to assume a position in which he is speaking on behalf of other faith communities this too should not come as a surprise in the light of the description I have offered of the repositioned Establishment. For better or worse the Established Church frequently does speak and act as a *primus inter pares* amongst faith communities. Rather than seeing this as presumption we can view it with Bretherton (2011) as a form of hospitality enacted by an established host community. Bretherton argues that such hospitality is neither presumptuous nor patronising but rather a prophetic action in which the hosts make themselves vulnerable through welcoming the stranger (Bretherton 2011: 360). For Ford also this apparently presumptuous position is theologically grounded - it is precisely the distinctive nature of theology as wisdom which makes it well positioned to model the inter-disciplinary conversation he envisages and encourages.

A great strength of D'Costa's position is his account of how theology and liturgy need to be reunited as theologians learn once again to "cohabit" with God, the object of their study through prayer (D'Costa 2005:117). Theology he argues must take place within a praying community, guided and judged by prayer. D'Costa describes his position as one of a "sectarian committed to the common good" (D'Costa 2005: 78). This is a cogent argument for the distinctive nature of theology and its relationship to the life of the Christian community – in particular as a worshipping community. D'Costa does not, however, explore the ways in which the worshipping life of the Church is already present in the university through the community available in its Christian students and staff and the life of the chaplaincy. Instead his argument leads ultimately to the creation of a Christian university and a plurality of forms of institution rather than ways to sustain the plurality within the secular institution. We are drawn back to the discussion about the nature of diversity and the claim that the secular institution can provide the necessary space for a true pluralism to flourish.

Ultimately, however, for D'Costa the distinguishing mark of a Christian university would be in an integration of knowledge. His vision of the Catholic university draws heavily on the *Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities* (John Paul II 1990) in which all knowledge is centred in Christ the *Logos* with theology and philosophy mediating the relative meaning of the different disciplines within this ultimate unity of truth.

D'Costa is concerned about the unity of knowledge which is possible within a created order, but he is explicit that this created order cannot simply be read in a neutral way. The theologian can not fall back on the theology of creation to support a sense of a shared world. Rather the Christian sees and understands the universality of creation through the specific revelation in Christ. As D'Costa points out this is the basis of Hauerwas' critique of liberalism – it is not that Christianity necessitates a fragmented rather than a universal world, but rather that there is a distinctive Christian reading of this universality (D'Costa 2005: 87).

D'Costa's critique of the modern university carries great force, he draws attention to the relationship between theology in the university and the worship life of the Christian community. Ultimately, however, his argument is not able to answer the question which I am asking here. D'Costa's vision of plurality as a plurality of distinctive institutions relocates the shared space of the *saeculum* into potentially separate compartments and does not therefore answer the fundamental question of a theology for the secular university. Whatever benefits the creation of a Catholic university in the UK might have it would still leave open the question of how to engage in faithful witness within the secular university. Although D'Costa's argument is based in the necessary unity of knowledge against a fragmentation of disciplines his conclusion is in danger of fragmenting the university by denying the possibility of its wholeness without the kind of relationship to theology he proposes. His solution lies in the unity of the curriculum rather than in the unity of the three historic aims of the university in the pursuit of knowledge, formation and social utility.

Stanley Hauerwas shares D'Costa's view that theology as we have become accustomed to it is a kind of captive in the modern secular university. For Hauerwas the public – private dichotomy is a means through which the secular liberal state seeks to establish a place for religion under the umbrella of its supposed neutrality. This leads to the privatisation of faith even in those universities which are Christian foundations. The Christian ethos becomes focused in a private arena of student life and well being rather than the public one of study and curriculum (Hauerwas 2007:48).

Hauerwas like D'Costa seeks to articulate the distinctiveness of Christian thought. Whereas D'Costa approaches this through focussing on the methodology of theology and the unity of knowledge, Hauerwas asks:

“What is the university for?” and “Who does the university serve?”
(Hauerwas 2007: 87)

A university must have a people – a wider community - whom it serves and for whom its activities and to whom its discourses make sense. The modern university has become above all the servant of the nation state (Hauerwas 2007: 104) and of money (Hauerwas 2007: 87). In contrast to this secular university Hauerwas articulates a vision of the Church as a distinct people living a life which offers an alternative to that of other peoples and means that theology must be “a free science in service of a free church” (2007:169). As modern universities grew up with and serve the purposes of the secular nation state the possibility has to be considered of a university which serves the Christian community as a people who are “local” to the institution. The Christian community can be the educated public to whom the university is valuable because it forms people in honest speech for that community. Such a university makes sense and genuinely educates, because it operates within a tradition which offers an organising principle of what this formation is for and what constitutes the good life it serves. The Christian community therefore becomes the equivalent of the *polis* which is served in an Aristotelian understanding of education as formation in virtue. In this way the university can regain its *telos* (Hauerwas 2007:116). As all knowledge shapes both us and our

interaction with the world, for Hauerwas learning is always moral formation and the university must therefore be an institution which focuses on virtues (Hauerwas 2007: 46).

Theology therefore should not be in the business of seeking to translate itself so that it can be understood by different disciplines, especially if that means translation into some common language based on foundational human experience. If it were possible for religious language to be translated in this way then the original language becomes redundant as it is no longer necessary as the vehicle of these meanings. Theology for Hauerwas should teach the language of faith as real public arguments depend not on adopting a supposedly shared and neutral language (which in fact serves a particular interest) but rather in a real plurality of languages.

This means that a “Christian University” is in danger of being impossible: to create it would become another kind of constantinianism, a claim to power by theology (Hauerwas 2007: 7). Hauerwas does not seek the restoration of the “Queen of the Sciences” for all talk of a unifying discipline is meaningless at a place where we are no longer clear how everything fits together. For Hauerwas there will be connections between theology and other disciplines – indeed theologians are well placed to have wide ranging connections and interest across disciplines. Theology, however, cannot argue for a place in the modern university on the basis that it holds other subjects together, this would constitute a claim to power which is inappropriate for a servant people. Rather theology must claim its place on the basis that it has something interesting to say, and theology will only have something interesting to say if it thinks differently from other disciplines because it serves a people whose life in Christ is sufficiently different and distinctive. To think about the nature of the university in Christian terms is therefore primarily to think about the nature of the Church, rather than of a Christian university (Hauerwas 2007:105).

For Hauerwas theology is a practice through which the Church seeks to live truthfully by speaking truthfully and clearly about the tradition in which we live. The theology of the university is responsible to and serves a people for whom faithful Christian speech and action is the core of their lives.

Hauerwas is prepared to admit that his position may be seen as ambiguous: theology to be free to be itself, and to that extent free from the secular university, yet the creation of a Christian university could be a contradictory claim to power; is the secular university supportable by the Christian community or not (Hauerwas 2007: 8)?

Although Hauerwas and D'Costa differ considerably, at the heart of both their arguments lies a concern about just how fragmentary secular modernity has become. For D'Costa it is still possible to speak in terms of a unifying academic discipline, but only in a university which has separated itself in some way from the secular pattern. For Hauerwas we live in an age of even greater fragmentation in which it would be arrogant to make claims to such unity and engagement with the secular university therefore becomes ambiguous and ad hoc. Both these positions offer a model of diversity based not in the rights bearing individual of the secular liberal paradigm but a diversity of communities of belief. Whilst accepting the argument that secularity is fragmented, the picture I have painted is one in which there is both coherence and fragmentation, and that there are theological reasons why we should expect to find this within the saeculum. Within secular HEI in Britain today we can see the multiple nature of modernity but also a dominant discourse in the way that the HEI has revised its secularism in responding to the new religious diversity. In making the case for a positive secularism I am arguing that a meaningful theological engagement with the secular university is not just possible but also necessary. For university chaplaincies to be a part of this engagement they will need to find distinctive ways of doing so in response to the dominant thin managerial account of religion in the university. This will mean going beyond traditional models of engagement through seeking the common good, through an apologetics

of translating Christian meaning into the context and relationships with neighbours based on religious dialogue. In other words the saeculum which is both coherent and fragmented is the context in which our mission takes place and we must therefore seek forms of engagement which are meaningful within this particular context.

3) Theologians on Theology and the University – What kind of Space is the University?

Given these very different theologies of the university (and of the place of theology as an academic discipline) we need to ask what kind of space is the secular university and what kind of presence and engagement chaplaincy could be in this place. Essentially this is a question of how diversity inheres within the secular university. David Ford has spoken about the future of the inter-faith and secular university as:

...the creation of an institutional space that might be described as 'shared ground' or 'mutual ground'. It is to be contrasted with both 'neutral ground' and 'contested ground'. (Ford 2007:289)

I suspect that in a world of multiple modernities we are likely to find elements of all these kinds of space (shared, neutral and contested) at work in any given institution. Whether we describe the secular in terms of a differentiation within societal space (Casanova) or a differentiation within time (Taylor and Markus), diversity for forms of life and belief are essential to any Christian understanding of it. Given that the secular space-time and therefore the secular university necessarily encompass diversity, and that there are examples of this diversity being not just contested but leading to conflict where does the secular-liberal claim to provide a neutral space now stand?

In Chapter 2 I argued that the origin of the secular university lies partly in the historic need for Christian diversity to be handled in an equitable way in the move from the establishment to the denominational mode of diversity. Our present situation is one in which a move is taking place between an ecumenical and a multi-faith and secular mode of diversity. Whilst a claimed neutrality in the stance of the secular university might signal a welcome intent to

continue this tradition of supporting diversity in an equitable and inclusive way the claim to occupy a neutral position is always self-contradictory. To defend a neutral form of secular institution against other possible positions is inevitably to be occupying a value laden position.

My discourse analysis of recent HE policy has suggested that ideological assumptions can indeed frequently be found beneath the publicly adopted position of neutrality. In looking at the history of HE chaplaincy I argued that the supposed neutral position of the secular HEI is something which was co-created with religious forms of life in the pursuit of new forms of institution better capable of sustaining diversity. The intent to form inclusive and equitable institutions can be owned as much by religious forms of life as non-religious. We do not have to arrive at this position of fairly shared space through what Taylor (2007) would call the “subtraction argument” in which religious forms are gradually stripped away to reveal the simply ethical intent which underlay them. It is equally possible to arrive at, support and work within a shared space on the basis of a theological understanding of the saeculum.

Ford’s vision of the secular and inter-faith university makes possible an institution in which a more self-aware tradition of secularism is the dominant partner for an institution where many forms of life and belief engage freely with each other. Ford is prepared to own that “neutral” ground is sometimes a necessity in highly contested situations (Ford 2007: 289), but at best I think we should see this “neutrality” as a rhetorical expression used to support positions where the institution seeks to behave equitably amidst tensions. More commonly it is simply a disguised use of power.

Chaplaincy in the secular HEI needs an account of what it is to be a Christian presence within an institutional space which promotes itself as a “neutral” secularity, but which is understood by the Christian community to be part of the essential diversity of the secular space and time.

Accepting the secular university as an interweaving of shared, self proclaimed “neutral” and contested ground allows that secular HEIs are not all the same. We have seen that

chaplains are placed within HEIs in a wide variety of arrangements often arising from historical circumstances or exigencies of funding and staffing rather than consistent understandings of the relationship by either the Churches or the HEI. In some ways the complex position of chaplaincies in the secular HEI is a model for the position of the Church within the complex secular, multi-faith and Christian society. To build an understanding of how to be chaplaincy within the secular university is essentially to explore the nature of the Church within the saeculum.

The model of chaplaincy which I now want to propose is capable of responding flexibly to the complex and variegated field of the secular HEI. In order to create this model I want firstly to look more deeply into the nature of these relationships which I have been describing as dialogical and consider how these might be better understood as a series of negotiations necessary to constitute the life of a shared and diverse community. Secondly, I will explore how the dominance of the secular-liberal tradition in the university means that the chaplaincy is present as a guest within the institution, yet primarily exercises its ministry through acts of hospitality. My third theme takes us back to the models of contextual theology offered by Bevans (2002) which were referred to briefly in the introduction. As a form of Christian wisdom in the university chaplaincy needs to be located contextually in the tension between being a translator of Christianity for the secular institution and a narrator of Christianity within the secular institution.

Building a Contextual Theology for University Chaplaincy

1) Dialogue and Negotiation – Chaplaincy in the Diverse University

We have seen how university chaplaincy increasingly takes place within a multi-faith context and in multi-faith teams. Chaplaincies remain extremely varied in their composition – some may have only a single member of staff, others may have an ecumenical diversity in their

team but not a multi-faith one. In most cases, however, there is some form of team in the chaplaincy and the team will represent some form of diversity.

The first study to really focus on the changed religious nature of the multi-faith campus was Sophie Gilliat-Ray's sociological survey *Religion in Higher Education - the Politics of the Multi-Faith Campus* (Gilliat-Ray 2000). As her title suggests, Gilliat-Ray saw the emergence of a contested religious space in the contemporary campus – a space which became part of the on-going internal political dynamics of the university and part of a wider dynamic of contested understandings of public space in general. In particular Gilliat-Ray saw these politics played out over issues such as prayer rooms which require the allocation of a significant resource of space. The history of HE chaplaincy had shown that diversity itself is not new in the university and that multi-faith and secular diversity is the current form of a process of development towards an increasing plurality of belief. I have argued that the managerial culture of the university has presumed that ecumenical models for understanding the internal diversity of Christianity can simply be extended to include the wider inter-faith diversity which is now prevalent. This is a model which I want to contest.

In some cases the development of multi-faith approaches to HE chaplaincy have been direct initiatives of the HEI and reflect the rather thin account of diversity and managerial approach which I have described. This approach has led to a small number of institutions appointing an Inter-Faith Officer, Faith Adviser or Well Being Manager rather than a chaplain – a manager of religious diversity rather than a representative of a faith tradition.¹¹ Such inter-faith officers may well manage a team of chaplains as faith representatives, but the structure ensures that these chaplains are being held at a distance from the institution as part of a process which differentiates and privatises religion in the university. The Faith Adviser as a manager of religious diversity in terms set by the secular institution is a development which is consistent

¹¹ Examples might be found at Westminster with the appointment of university Inter-Faith Adviser at UCL where there is a university "Race, Religion and Belief Champion", or at UWE with the recreation of Chaplaincy as a Well Being Centre.

with secular liberalism – if faith belongs to the private and individual realm rather than the public life of the institution any manifestation of it which impacts on the running of the institution has to be “managed” by someone with the appropriate professional detachment and expertise. Whilst this development may appear to the secular HEI to be in continuity with the tradition of chaplaincy it is in fact a co-option of the chaplaincy to other purposes.

The model of a professional Faith Adviser as a manager for chaplains who are external and occasional visitors has the potential to create competition between the faith community representatives for access and facilities in the HEI. If the presence of religion is framed as a series of issues and potential conflicts which need to be managed to ensure the smooth running and good reputation of the institution then there is a fair chance that this will turn into a self fulfilling prophecy.

In the managerial model, dialogue between faith traditions becomes a tool to prevent conflict and side step around the potential for faith traditions to make truth claims. In the name of community cohesion a number of initiatives have been launched to encourage inter-faith dialogue amongst students.¹²

Whilst the diversification of the chaplaincy team has in some cases come about through the managerial initiative of the institution, in other situations chaplaincies have themselves taken the initiative in creating more diverse teams and have had to argue for the benefit of this expansion to the institution which may feel it already has more religion than it really needs. The dynamic of dialogue and negotiation for chaplaincy which I am suggesting here is one which would seek to initiate and build multi-faith approaches but would do so on the basis of the distinctive contribution of each tradition rather than offering a standardised institutional model for “managing” diversity.

¹²E.g.s “Conversations for the Soul” run jointly by the NUS and St. Ethelburga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace. See: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/news/article/faith/732> (accessed 23/5/2012), and the “flashPODS” events promoted by Campusalaam and the Religious Literacy Project see: http://www.campusalam.org/downloads/flash_pod_pack-1b79d.pdf (accessed 31/5/2012).

The task of creating chaplaincies which are appropriate to the form of diversity found in a given HEI should not be left to university managers alone. To do so would be to allow the necessary diversity of the saeculum of Higher Education to be shaped without reference to a distinctive Christian understanding of that diversity. This is the danger inherent in models which emphasise either approaching that distinctiveness solely through the Christian university or only as an ad hoc series of relationships. Christian chaplaincies should therefore take the initiative in developing models for multi-faith diversity. The constitution of multi-faith chaplaincy teams is often confusing with combinations of paid and voluntary, full time and part time, those who already have roles as members of staff in the institution and those who represent local faith communities, those who are present on a regular and pro-active basis and those whose contribution is wholly responsive. A wide range of contractual relationships exist between chaplains and their institutions. To an administrator this can appear untidy, but in the model I am proposing these complex relationships are simply one aspect of the practice of sharing diverse space through negotiation which forms the chaplaincy and models a richly textured diversity for the wider university community.

The model which I am suggesting might be described as the negotiated multi-faith chaplaincy. Religious diversity is not a level playing field and negotiation recognises that there is some discourse of power at work which may well concern resources and goods which are of value to all parties. Rather than seeing religious difference as a centripetal force to be contained by management we can understand it as a kind of politics of negotiation through which a truly civil space is being created rather than destroyed.

I have described the situation in which the Christian Churches and the Church of England in particular act as spokespersons for all the communities of faith as a “repositioned Establishment”. There are obvious dangers in this position — for such an Establishment to act on behalf of others risks misrepresentation of true diversity and the imposition of Christian agendas on communities who have their own distinctive voice. The Christian chaplaincy will

frequently find itself in a leading role within the negotiated multi-faith team. Full time and employed chaplains (almost without exception Christians) may well be placed by the university in positions of management responsibility over facilities and resources used by faith groups. The issue of power simply cannot be avoided in these relationships. Rather than presuming that some form of neutral stance can be adopted by the Christian chaplaincy placed in this position, we should be seeking distinctively Christian and theologically informed ways of acknowledging and exercising these dynamics of power. I will explore this further in the second of the three dynamics of chaplaincy – that of guest and host. By acting as a host the Christian community can take the role of servant towards the other faith communities. Christian hospitality as it has been described by Bretherton (2006) and Barnes (2002) involves the host making space for the guest to be truly themselves. This relationship will be discussed more fully in the following section.

The negotiated multi-faith chaplaincy offers an alternative to the bland and undifferentiated concept of neutral public space. It will not seek to respond to the needs of differing faith groups by assuming that the needs of one group can be simply translated into the needs of another.

An example of such negotiation might well be found in approaches to the difficult issue of the provision of prayer space on campus. Several universities have responded to this by seeking to create shared prayer facilities which are neutral spaces lacking in symbols and available to all groups on the same basis. This attempt to provide a formal equivalence of resource fails to take into account the very different kinds of space and time which are used for prayers across the faith traditions. The result of providing a neutral and shared space is that it frequently becomes by default a space shaped for Islamic prayer because of the specific requirements of this traditions. As an alternative to this formal equivalence through the provision of a neutral shared prayer space, the negotiated chaplaincy might well advocate a dynamic equivalence of provision taking into account the needs and nature of the differing communities of prayer.

Muslim prayer will normally require a specific space to be set aside in the university because there is no other way to provide a “no shoes” area which is used according to a constantly shifting timetable. It does not follow from this that the Christian community will require a formal equivalent in its own dedicated prayer space (as some Christian Union groups have argued) – rather the kind of spaces and times required for meetings of Christian groups together with the availability of local church buildings suggest that a dynamic equivalent can be found in access to space through the university’s room booking system. An important role for the chaplaincy can be to ensure that these kinds of arrangements are produced by genuine negotiation in which the richly textured diversity of the faith communities is fully expressed.

I have described how the practice of inter-faith dialogue is currently being promoted in the university and more widely as a method for supporting the common good of community cohesion. There are dangers in this. Firstly, that the faith communities are being co-opted and approximated to the purposes of public policy rather than engaging with public life and one another out of the dynamic of their own traditions. In this case the dialogue is serving to obscure real identity, belief and difference. Secondly, inter-faith dialogue as we have become familiar with it can be an elitist practice which distracts from more pressing issues of the common good. Michael Barnes distinguishes between dialogue focused on content and dialogue as an ethical encounter between persons (Barnes 2002: 20). He contrasts the dialogical engagement of Christianity and Hinduism through on the one hand the elite and contents based dialogue of the Ashram movement and on the other hand the praxis of Dalit theology (Barnes 2002: 153, 158). For Barnes there is a “broken middle” in inter-faith relationships, a fracture to which we must respond by “negotiating the middle” (Barnes 2002: 230ff). Whilst Barnes is critiquing the pluralist model of dialogue his argument for an ethical purpose to dialogue offers continuity between the dialogues of content, experience and action – or in my terms a continuity in the dynamic between dialogue and negotiation for the university chaplaincy.

The negotiated chaplaincy will engage in dialogue as what Bretherton (2011) describes as a “civic practice”. In this model dialogue belongs to the pursuit of the common good, it is part of the way in which the Christian community engages in the process of building society. Dialogue is not simply in and for itself, but a practice set within a wider context – that of building society as a shared space. To this extent the negotiated chaplaincy may well want to engage with the kind of dialogues currently being promoted to students, but its focus would be more on the positive opportunity to build a space in which difference is recognised than on the negative agendas of dialogue as the management of religious tension. This will require a high level of religious literacy amongst chaplains together with an understanding of the available theologies and methodologies for inter-faith relationships.

2) Guest and Hosts – Resident Aliens or Ambassadors for Christ?

If there are difficulties with the use of dialogue for our understanding of diversity, the concept of negotiation must also be used with care. My point in introducing the dynamic between dialogue and negotiation is twofold - firstly to establish that the presence of power and unequal relationships has to be acknowledged and secondly to locate dialogue as part of a process through which a shared space is being created rather than focusing on the content of the dialogue. The negotiated chaplaincy is not without influence in the university and the repositioned Establishment must recognise that the relationships between faith communities are neither equal nor neutral. Rather than the pursuit of diversity as equality I have suggested that chaplaincies are engaged in building a dynamic equivalence for the place of the faith communities in the HEI.

I have already drawn on Michael Barnes’ work in establishing dialogue as an ethical encounter with the other. Barnes focuses on an imperative not to do violence to the other through the processes of essentialising and objectifying. The chaplaincy needs to find a theologically

informed approach to the dynamics of power in negotiations. Barnes argues that to avoid essentialising and objectifying the other, the Christian has to find an appropriate “passivity”, but one in which the Christian story continues to be told faithfully and prophetically (Barnes 2002: 157). For both Barnes and for Bretherton the form which this “passivity” takes is the humility of Christian hospitality. Christianity frequently stands as the host faith community by virtue of its numbers, extent and history within the university. Within the HE sector overall, however, (and not just in the secular foundation HEIs), it is the secular-liberal tradition which plays host and the chaplaincy is always in some sense a guest. This dynamic of guest and host can provide a theological and ethical basis for the relationships of power which exist for the negotiated chaplaincy.

The problem with what I have described as the thin managerial account of religion which predominates in the secular HEI is that this model does not truly allow religious forms of life to be themselves or speak in their own terms. Whilst purporting to be an ethical position in terms of the secular paradigms of tolerance and fairness, the managerial account is in fact objectifying religion by focussing only on those aspects which are of “interest” to the institution in its public life. Tolerance and fairness prove to be quiet forms of violence towards faith. The negotiation which the chaplaincy models must therefore be based in an alternative theologically grounded account of difference, one which enables negotiation to become a grace rather than a conflict. From the early Jesuit missions to the ashram movement of Abhishiktananda and others Barnes finds examples of just such a gracious response to the other in the history of the Jesuit missions (Barnes 2002: 153). For Barnes this gracious and essentially ethical encounter is grounded in a spirituality of respect for the other. It is precisely because relationships are asymmetrical that they are forced to be ethical (Barnes 2002: 97) – just as our relationship to the otherness of God is always asymmetrical.

The negotiated chaplaincy will find itself in asymmetrical relationships – both as guest within the secular HEI and when acting as a host through its engagement with other faith

communities. Whether guest or host it should act graciously recognising that its own relationships must reflect the gracious nature of God's asymmetric encounter with us. This is what Bretherton calls hospitality as holiness (2006). It is a hospitality which is deeply rooted in both the spirituality and theology of the chaplaincy.

Australian chaplain Geoff Boyce (2010) has written a theological narrative of the creation of a multi-faith chaplaincy team at Flinders University. Drawing on the pastoral theology of Henri Nouwen, Boyce describes hospitality as making physical, social, intellectual and emotional space for the other (Boyce 2010: 14) and then gives an account of contextualising this theology at the Flinders chaplaincy. This vision for chaplaincy had to be articulated against an alternative one offered by university managers in which the chaplaincy would be built on the basis of a shared spirituality transcending traditions. Against this Boyce offered a model in which traditions both remain separate but acknowledge some area of commonality.

Nevertheless the chaplaincy's mission was codified in terms of a mandate to "*nurture spirit, build community*" (Boyce 2010: 40 author's emphasis) and elements of a presumed underlying commonality between faiths remain part of Boyce's approach.

Boyce stresses the need for hospitality to begin within the chaplaincy team and to provide the basis for building that team. An advantage of this approach to team building is that it ensures chaplains hold one another to account as both guests and hosts. Given the complex interweaving of relationships between faith communities and between the chaplaincy and the university, hospitality can only be exercised in partnership with learning how to receive the gift of vulnerability as a guest.

In contrast to this Hauerwas and Willimon (1989) have described the Church not so much a guest in the world as a colony of resident aliens. The Church's task is therefore not to be "running errands for the world" (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 94), or to translate its message into the language of the world, but rather to build the people of God who provide a counterpoint to the world. The relationship between Church and the world is not necessarily

conflictual – rather the nature of church as an alternative community will mean that it will engage with the world in a series of varying ad hoc relationships. We have already seen something of these ad hoc relationships in the discussion of Hauerwas’ theology of the university earlier in this chapter. Hauerwas and Willimon present a strong argument for the distinctive nature of Christianity as a form of life in response to the life of Jesus rather than a set of beliefs (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 22) and I want to return to this argument in considering the chaplaincy in the dynamic between translation and narration. The image of Christian presence as colony and resident aliens lacks the sense of invitation and graciousness which is offered by that of guest and host and is for that reason not ideal for our purposes.

In the introduction we met a number of authors who describe chaplaincy from the perspective of ministry. For these authors the chaplaincy in a secular institution has an existence which is ambiguous through being partly of the Church and partly of the institution. If we are searching for an alternative Biblical image to describe the ambiguous presence of chaplaincy in the secular HEI, I suggest that this might be found in Paul’s description of the Church’s mission to continue the reconciling work of God as “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Cor. 5:20) rather than in the description of the Church as colony of heaven.

The “Embassy” exists in the dynamic of guest and host which I am seeking to describe for chaplaincy. An Embassy receives the hospitality of space within the host nation with complete autonomy over its own buildings. An ambassador uses this sovereign space as a place in which to exercise hospitality on behalf of her/his nation and uses the privileges of a guest in order to engage in negotiation with the host nation. The ambassador is one who is sent to represent the mission of the sending nation to the host nation. Paul offers an image of his apostolate as an embassy in continuity with the mission and sending of Jesus in whom we see the reconciling nature of God (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Here then is an image for the chaplaincy which is in but never quite of the university, a chaplaincy which is given space and freedom to

remain true to itself and allowed a voice – a chaplaincy as mission and as a presence of Church within the institution.

3) Knowledge and Wisdom – Moving from Translation to Narration

My analysis of contemporary chaplaincy responses suggested that some account has to be given of the chaplaincy in terms of a Christian understanding of knowledge within the university and I have looked for this understanding in the Christian wisdom which David Ford has described. Ford argues that wisdom traditions need to be present in the university through academic departments dedicated to the study of religions. He sees this presence as necessary to the thriving of the secular and inter-faith university.

The theology department in the secular university is, however, limited in the ways in which it can embody such wisdom. Gavin D’Costa (2006) has expressed deep concern about the continuance of theology in the secular university where it is divorced from the liturgical life of the Church and loses its ability to truly cohabit with God. Hauerwas (2007) questions how theology can be done in the university if it is in some way separated from its people in the life of the Christian community. The theology department is simply not tasked by the university to cry out to God in prayer or to sit in silence sharing the questions of those who suffer. This is not to suggest that the theology department does not embody or enact wisdom – but rather that its role in the secular university limits the ways in which it can do so and this is the point which D’Costa and Hauerwas are making. The practical wisdom of the chaplaincy can complement the theoretic wisdom of the academy – it will seek answers to questions which arise directly in its pastoral and liturgical practice, in its apologetics, and in its negotiation of the diverse and multi-faith nature of the university. All of these areas are of course also subject matter for the theologian in the academy who has a role which must balance reflection and action in a different way.

In a lecture to university chaplains Paul Fiddes describes this as the difference between the “high” theology of the academy and the “everyday theology” done by all members of the Church (Fiddes 2005). Fiddes also recognises that in many HEIs the chaplaincy will be the *only* [author’s emphasis] place in the university where theological reflection will take place (Fiddes 2005: 12). I’m not sure that this is entirely true or fair to the conversations and thinking which go on amongst students and staff of faith, but Fiddes is right in recognising the potential for the chaplaincy in the HEI to both complement the work of the theology department and in the absence of such a department to continue the work of theology by other means (Fiddes 2005: 12).

The wisdom of academic theology needs to be complemented by the embodied liturgical, pastoral and missional wisdom of the chaplaincy. Ford’s moving description of wisdom based on the metaphor of grammatical moods argues that wisdom inhabits each of these moods and not just the indicative voices in which propositional knowledge typically inheres in the university (Ford 2007: 45-50). Wisdom therefore cries out in many voices and through its pastoral, liturgical and missional presence chaplaincy is well placed to embody these voices of hope, ethical demand, openness to uncertainty, questioning and longing.

A conversation between a dominant secular-propositional understanding of knowledge in the university and a Christian-wisdom understanding could take place as simply a dialogue of ideas and content. Such a dialogue, however, would fall short of the kind of ethical encounter with the other which I have been describing through the theology of Michael Barnes. A dialogue solely of concepts is not the role for chaplaincy which seeks to offer a more embodied form of wisdom. Such a dialogue would fail to fully recognise and include those many voices in which wisdom cries. Using the dynamic tension between translation and narration I want to offer a model of how this understanding of knowledge as wisdom embodied in the life of a tradition can be contextualised for chaplaincy in Higher Education.

Stephen Bevans describes the “translation model” as the oldest and most widespread of the six models for theologies of contextualisation which he offers (Bevans 2002: 37). The translation model of contextualisation presumes that there is a kernel of gospel message which can be identified in a propositional form and inculturated through a process analogous to translation from one language to another. Whilst not dismissing this model, Bevans argues that it has two significant weaknesses. Firstly, the model presumes that faith can be reduced to propositional form and secondly it assumes that all cultures have the same basic shape allowing a consistent methodology of translation through dynamic equivalence (Bevans 2002: 41).

Hauerwas and Willimon are more rigorous in their critique of the methodology of “translation” – though for fundamentally the same reasons as Bevans arguing that the gospel is a form of life and not a set of propositional beliefs (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 21-22). The theological task is not one of translating the gospel into contemporary categories but rather lies in translating the world to Jesus (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989: 24). This means that the Christian faith is to be lived as an alternative form of life before God in the world rather than accommodated to the world. The alternative model which Hauerwas and Willimon go on to offer is one which Bevans (2002) would describe as counter-cultural.

There is a further difficulty for the translation model if it is to be used to contextualise the mission of chaplaincy in the secular university. Charles Taylor (2007) describes a form of contemporary secularity in which Christianity is no longer believable for the majority of people. This situation is in contrast to that of earlier forms of modernity in which Christianity was widely believable though not necessarily believed – a position in which a model of translating faith into a culture seems a plausible missionary stance. A different missionary stance will, however, be needed for the kind of late modernity which Taylor describes. In this position there is little or no missionary and apologetic traction in a contextual theology of translation for the culture into which the faith is being “translated” has lost the ability to carry

this meaning and content. Instead Christianity has to be narrated as an alternative story with its own integrity.

The mission of university chaplains is located within institutions which have the extension and transfer of knowledge as their core business and the propositional form of knowledge has come to be the dominant form in the university – though it is also challenged and critiqued from within. Faced with the dominance of propositional knowledge in their context there is a prima facie case for chaplaincies to operate with the translation model of contextualisation. Like Bevens I do not wish to dismiss this model completely – it has a purpose within the University context, and the model of translation cannot be lightly discarded amongst a people formed by a scripture which is normally read in translation. As a tradition of embodied wisdom, however, chaplaincy needs a deeper understanding of its work in translation - one which will help it move towards a model of contextualisation through narration. As a form of mission within the university the primary calling of the chaplaincy is to tell the Christian story – to narrate – and I will return shortly to some of the ways in which this is done.

Once again, Barnes' analysis and critique of the theology of dialogue and otherness can help us. Barnes describes the work of the sixteenth century Jesuit missionaries Matteo Ricci in China and Roberto de Nobili in South India. Ricci and de Nobili both entered deeply into the intellectual culture of their mission fields, adopting not just the dress and manners of the respective Confucian and Brahmin intellectual elites but seeking to enter into their forms of thought and discourse. Their lives and work represent something more than a simple "translation" of the gospel into another language and culture and demonstrate the need for a genuine ethical encounter with the otherness these cultures represented (Barnes 2002:143-148).

It is possible to find examples of Christian life itself being translated into new contexts in ways which go beyond the simple transfer of meaning and propositions. Translation can be something much wider than the process of conveying meaning from one language to another

and a specific ecclesial use may help us here – this is translation as the transfer of a Bishop between dioceses, or the removal and re-interment of a saint’s relic. The sense here is of a mission and ministry being relocated to a new context through the movement of significant people within the Christian community. Such relocation will require change, a new embodiment and inculturation – but this is not just the translation of propositional meaning – rather it is learning to continue the Christian life and mission in a different place, a process requiring wisdom and judgement. This is the kind of translation which Barnes has identified in the early Jesuit missions, and it is very different from the sort of linguistic-propositional translation against which Hauerwas and Willimon have argued. Translation can remain a useful image for the theology of contextualisation, but one to be used with care.

Alongside this understanding of translation and to some extent in tension with it, the contextualising work of the chaplaincy is an act of narration. The task of faithful witness is to learn how to tell the Christian story in this place. In order to bear witness to the Christian story it is first necessary to tell it in the straightforward sense of narration and this narration is perhaps most clearly seen and heard in acts of liturgy and the study of scripture.

In liturgy the scriptures are not just read and interpreted but also interrogate and interpret our lives as we hear and respond to them. Whether liturgy is based on traditional and authorised texts or created new as a fresh expression of worship it is a work of narration, of “speaking about God’s deeds of power” (Acts 2:12). Traditional forms of liturgy do not generally feature very highly in the work of chaplaincies in secular universities. There will not be the patterns of chapel and choir found in collegiate universities, and few opportunities to gather students and staff together for regular worship.

Whether or not the chaplaincy in the secular HEI is able to offer a regular pattern of worship supported by the Christian community within the university it will occasionally be called upon to help the institution in creating its own liturgies, an action in which the narration is being contextualised. These “liturgies” emerge most commonly within the context of community

responses to grief and tragedy – the untimely death of a student or colleague, or the need to respond to large scale tragedy, perhaps occurring far away but which has touched the lives of this very international community. In these circumstances the neutral public space which the secular institution seeks to create can be very strained. What language and symbols can be used for a liturgy in such a “neutral” space? Any collection of the material which has been used and created by chaplains and others to meet these occasions would be a rich material for the study of the shared life of our universities.¹³ In the absence of a proper study, however, my point is to note the way in which secular HEIs do indeed make use of the expertise of chaplains to guide them in creating liturgies. Chaplains can best respond through engaging not so much in a process of translation as one of contextualised narration as they seek to tell the story not just in the content of the liturgies which are created but the gracious and inclusive processes they will follow in order to produce these liturgies.

I have described the pastoral work of the chaplaincy as the everyday stuff of its life. The pastoral of course overlaps with liturgy in the way I have been describing it, but is in itself a form of narration. Such a pastoral life is a response to the gospel – it is a continuation of the ministry of Jesus in its healing and reconciliation. Timothy Jenkins suggests that universities typically have three reasons for chaplaincy to exist – tradition (we’ve had one for a long time), kindness (someone with time for others within the marketplace of HE), and moderation (chaplaincy as a control on fanatical or unreasonable religion) (Jenkins 2006: 5). Few would doubt the need for kindness in an increasingly bureaucratised university, but the pastoral mission of the chaplaincy is founded in loving-kindness of God rather than human acts of kindness. It is not that Christian people are more kind or unkind than others, but rather that they are a people shaped by and responding to the character of God as revealed in Christ, and that character is revealed as the grace which is the loving-kindness of God. It is the gracious

¹³ Some work has taken place on the nature of language, liturgy and prayer in contemporary institutional spaces. See for example Sophie Gilliat-Ray’s (2005) study of prayer requests written in the sacred space at the Millennium Dome.

quality of the Christian life which leads to the passivity in the face of the other which Barnes describes, and to the willingness to make space for the other in hospitality. It is this willingness to live graciously and hospitably rather than human kindness which is the engine of the chaplaincy's pastoral mission. This day to day "stuff" is therefore part of the contextualisation of the chaplaincy as narration – it is how we tell the story of the Christian life in this place.

Chapter Three Conclusions

This chapter has been concerned with three areas – the nature of secularity, the nature of the university, and the nature of chaplaincy. I have attempted to draw together the different strands which led out from my project to describe university chaplaincy through its context within the secular university. This has led me to a description of the secular space-time as one which is essentially diverse and shared and in which the dichotomy of public and private is very elusive.

Recent theological reflection on the university and the place of Christian theology within it has focussed on the nature of the Christian community and its relationship to knowledge.

Responses to this have varied from the conclusion that distinctive Christian universities are needed for theology to flourish (D'Costa) to Ford's subtle description of theology as dialogical wisdom in the collegiate university and Higton's engagement with the secular HEI.

Surprisingly these theologians have had little or nothing to say directly about the presence of chaplaincies as an expression of Christian community and wisdom within the secular HEI.

I have used three dynamic concepts as building blocks for a contextual chaplaincy – the tension between dialogue and negotiation, the twin role of guest and host and the movement from a contextualisation through knowledge in translation towards one of wisdom in

narration. In each of these three dynamics I have tried to show some of the ways in which they actually take root within the life of chaplaincies.

This is a study of contextual theology for chaplaincy as mission – as faithful witness in the secular university. In a context whose social imaginary (to use Taylor's term) makes Christianity believable though frequently not believed, mission can take place through an apologetics of translation focusing on making Christian meaning accessible. Amongst the multiple modernities of the secular university Christianity is frequently unbelievable and mission cannot primarily take place through contextualisation as translation. In order to make Christianity believable in this context it must be offered as a distinctive form of life within which belief is possible. The university chaplaincy provides an opportunity for just such a form of life to be embedded within the university. This is a process which will require continual negotiation; it will need the wisdom to live graciously as both guest and host in the university.

The Conclusion which follows seeks to locate and apply this understanding of the wise and hospitable chaplaincy and offer some more concrete suggestions for the continuing development of university chaplaincy.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the twenty first century university chaplaincy offers a distinctive form of Christian presence in the public square of the secular and multi-faith university. The university, however, has developed as a secular institution as a part of much wider changes in diversity and secularity which I sought to chart in the historical analysis of Chapter 2. To look at chaplaincy in the contemporary university is therefore to look at one model for the presence of the Church in a secular and multi-faith society. Chaplaincy ministry is missional, seeking to make faith public through its process of continual negotiation with the context, in its narration of the Christian story in acts of hospitality and grace and by seeking to embody Christian Wisdom within the university as a community of knowledge. All of this takes place within a context which, although increasingly ready to acknowledge the public presence of faith, seeks to do so through processes of management and thin accounts of diversity based in the concept of a neutral public space.

There is an urgent need to understand and reposition chaplaincy in this setting, and to recognise its significance as a ministry which can pioneer new models for Christian presence. Whilst Fresh Expressions of Church, the Emerging Church movement and Pioneer Ministries have recently received a great deal of attention as inculturated forms of mission, chaplaincy is an age old form of mission which continually reinvents and re-presents itself within changing social forms. Behind the question of how chaplaincy is to be present in a multi-faith and secular society lies the question of how the Church is to be present – and chaplaincy seeks to explore answers to this question which have wider relevance than the immediate context of the institutions it serves. In conclusion I want to suggest a theme to which my argument has led but which cannot be explored within the confines of this thesis. In what ways does the example of chaplaincy in the HEI which I have described as narration, hospitality and wisdom offer a model of Christian presence for the post-Christendom Church in the secular and multi-faith society? The question which remains at the end of this study is not so much what

chaplaincy should look like in response to its arguments, but how can the Church learn from the model of chaplaincy as it seeks new forms of mission and presence to serve the present age.

Chaplaincies are often regarded as having less claim on increasingly stretched Church resources than the mission and ministry of the local church. Many chaplains recognise the need for better advocacy for their work – in addition to the continuous negotiation with the institutions, chaplaincies are frequently in negotiation with their sending denominations.

In addition to the obvious pressures on resourcing which affect all areas of church life there are two particular shifts in the position of HE chaplaincy in the churches which need to be monitored and if possible corrected. The first of these is visible and measurable, the second less tangible. Partly through the pressure on resources and partly through limited understandings of mission there is an increasing tendency for churches to appoint student workers who are responsible for embedding students in the life of a congregation rather than chaplains who engage in mission with the whole HEI. The second and less tangible pressure is a sense that ministers who spend too much time in chaplaincy quickly become cast in the role of specialists who will not therefore be called upon to take other and wider roles in the life of the church. Chaplaincy can be perceived as a dead end and it is all the more important that resources for training, appraisal and continuing development in ministry are in place in order to sustain strong long term ministries in this field.

It is therefore essential to the future of HE chaplaincy that a clear case should be made for its work. Such a case needs to be based in a narrative of the story of HE chaplaincy, an analysis of its current situation in the sector in which it serves, and a theological rationale for chaplaincy as mission. I hope that some elements for such a case will be found in this thesis. In different ages previous accounts of chaplaincy to the wider Church have focussed on its sacramental ministry in defined Christian communities, its pastoral ministry to gather and serve the faithful within a secular context and its prophetic role in seeking to speak truth to power within the

institution. Whilst honouring these traditions and their continued relevance in parts of the sector, I have argued that a model for chaplaincy within the secular and multi-faith university must go beyond these traditions and be fully missional in intent. The strongest argument for the importance of chaplaincies in secular institutions is that they model and pioneer ways of being Church within these contexts and are therefore essential to repositioning the mission of the local church within our changing society. The Church needs chaplaincies to help it relearn how to be Church for the present age. If such chaplaincies are to be successful they need far more than financial resources and I suggest that two areas are in need of particular attention: the selection and training of chaplains, and the way in which chaplaincy creates an ongoing conversation through conferencing.

Training and Selection

Taking seriously the argument of this thesis might suggest three areas for chaplaincy training:

Firstly, there has been a recurring emphasis on the secular space-time as essentially and necessarily diverse. The multi-faith and secular context for chaplaincy is the form which this diversity currently takes, but diversity as the experience of the other is neither new nor restricted to the university. The chaplaincy which engages in the secular institution as both guest and host will need high levels of religious literacy, and awareness of the theologies and methodologies available for its encounter with the other. The chaplaincy needs to be able to offer alternatives to the thin managerial responses to religious diversity found in secular narratives, exploring richly textured models of relationship in which both genuine otherness and the dynamics of power are recognised. Some of the authors whose work has informed this thesis are engaged in Scriptural Reasoning,¹⁴ and this could provide an example of

¹⁴ See <http://www.scripturalreasoning.org/>

engagement and dialogue between faiths which has the ability to enable the kind of encounters I have been envisaging.

Secondly, I have argued that HE chaplaincy has to be engaged with the unique nature of the university as a place dedicated to knowledge – to teaching, learning and research. Part of my argument is that the basic “stuff” of chaplaincy in pastoral care and liturgy presents an alternative Christian model of knowledge as wisdom within the university. Chaplains can engage practically and professionally with the core purposes of the university by embarking on a further academic qualification themselves, by being research active in areas of expertise and through taking occasional opportunities for teaching. These processes are essential to a full and proper engagement with the purpose and life of the university and not desirable extras for which the chaplain might make time amidst their core duties. It is therefore important that job descriptions, funding and training arrangements support this engagement with teaching-learning and research. It is also important to meet the challenge of appointing chaplains who are equal to this task. This strand is likely to increase in importance if the provision of Theology and Religious Studies declines in HEIs. Chaplaincy may have to become a continuation of theology by other means.

Thirdly, chaplains will need to be increasingly well resourced in their own traditions. If the HE chaplaincy is to be the presence of the community of wisdom which Ford has described it will need chaplains who are deeply engaged with their own tradition both theologically and spiritually. As individuals chaplains may or may not be wise, but the faith which we represent is Wisdom. The narrative and negotiated chaplaincy needs both a depth of engagement with the tradition – the “going deeper” as Ford (2011) describes it - but will also need a breadth of engagement with the many concrete expressions of Christian community within and around the university. The third training requirement is then one which is certainly not unique to HE chaplaincy but a basis for ministry everywhere in our secularised society – chaplains need to be theologically literate and ecumenically engaged.

In addition to training needs attention will need to be given to selection processes for chaplains. In order to recruit new chaplains – especially those with the aptitude to engage theologically in the ways I have described, the appointment of chaplains to universities can not take place at a purely local level. Universities are institutions embedded in specific locations but it is their very nature to be of national importance and international character. Purely local church responses to this mission will inevitably prove inadequate in the long run.

These changes are subtle and cultural ones, but part of the remedy must lie with chaplains themselves in being better advocates for the mission within the life of the wider church – and remaining more closely connected to that life.

Conferencing and Networking

In the introduction I described an absence of HE chaplaincy from itself through its lack of a coherent narrative and limited self awareness. Some of the most important documents for this study have come out of chaplains' conferences. This suggests two themes – firstly, that part of the “absence” of HE chaplaincy may simply be that it is an oral tradition carried forward through conferencing rather than in a written form. Secondly, that these conferences have provided significant points of engagement between the work of chaplains and of academic theologians.

To discover that HE chaplaincy has largely carried forward its own story through a process of conferencing is encouraging, for it fits well with my description of chaplaincy as a series of conversations, dialogues and negotiations. The importance of conferences in this story suggests that chaplains have indeed been engaged in an internal dialogue which has taken them deeper into their own tradition. Conferencing and networking are also vital in linking chaplains to the life of the wider church – which in the language of my own Methodist tradition would be described as “being in connexion”. There is, however, some evidence that

attendance at chaplaincy conferences is declining and there may be a shift in the culture of university chaplaincy from this strong sense of community through conferencing.

The revitalisation of this tradition of conferencing is therefore essential to the health of HE chaplaincy. This is not easy as so many chaplains work on a part time or sessional basis and lack the time or resource for residential conferences. A particular responsibility may therefore fall on those chaplains who are full time specialists to create and support frameworks for conferencing and meeting (both face to face and virtual) which are accessible and inclusive to part time and sessional chaplains. One of the ways in which those who are privileged to work as full time university chaplains can develop their ambassadorial role of relating university to church and church to university is by taking a lead in engaging those whose work is part time or sessional in the ongoing conversation of chaplaincy. Job descriptions, budgets and programmes of Continuing Professional Development can reflect these needs and opportunities.

Given these changing conditions, it may not be possible to revitalise the conversation of chaplaincy solely through traditional conferences and meetings. The secondary orality of digital media may well provide an opportunity for a new kind of chaplaincy conversation. At present HE chaplains share a Yahoo Group and a facebook group whilst a number of key (ecumenical) chaplaincy documents are hosted on the HE pages of the Church of England's website. A more inclusive and robust strategy might lie in developing the online resources through the Churches Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG) which is already responsible for arranging most HE chaplaincy training. A professional online journal would be a welcome addition to these resources and could provide opportunities for a more rigorously organised exchange of ideas and practice.

Chaplaincy as Mission in Multiple Modernities

Modernity takes many forms and has proved to be recursive – including rather than simply replacing many of the features of earlier forms of society. The continued relevance and strength of the collegiate forms of university chaplaincy is one example of such inclusivity. Alongside this I have argued that public policy in the HEI shows an increasing acceptance of a place for faith, but does so on the basis that faith remains something defined and separate from the institution. In contrast to both these positions contemporary secularity can also take forms in which the conditions of belief are so far altered that faith is no longer a plausible option, but has become literally incredible. HE chaplaincy finds itself engaged with all of these multiple forms of late modernity.

In this context Christian mission and evangelism still takes place largely through a model of translation – it is concerned with finding the right words, images and media to translate the gospel to the contemporary world. Such mission presumes that Christianity is believable and that the prevailing culture is capable of carrying its meanings and supporting its life, but for some of these modernities mission as translation is doomed to failure. The alternative which I have proposed is mission as narration – telling the Christian story through living the Christian life in a place where it is neither understood nor accepted. Chaplaincy, whether it be in the secular HEI or elsewhere, embodies such a model and in doing so it models a way for the Church to be present in a fractured context of multiple modernities. To draw out this conclusion is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis and the thought must be left here as one which opens the possibility of further exploration. Chaplaincy is mission through the Christian story told in the Christian life lived beyond the pale of belief, it is not a luxurious extra added to the core life of the Church but a model for ways of being Church.

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Appendix:

Summary of Areas Covered by DMin Programme with Links to this Thesis

Year 1

Theology and Ministry:

The opening module of the programme provided a useful link back to my MA dissertation on pneumatology which had taken place many years previously. An essay entitled “What Kind of Knowledge is Christian Doctrine” focused on the nature of theology as a form of knowledge. Reading included a re-engaging with the work of Lindbeck (1984) with which I was already familiar, but also introduced me to Hans Frei and others. The theme of the nature of knowledge and how Christian knowledge relates to the university became a significant one in the thesis - the reflections on the nature of liberal theology in particular were informed by this early essay and by the work of Lindbeck. The challenge to think through the various knowledges of the university and their relationship to Christian theology and Christian life was generated by this opening module and remains a theme through the thesis.

Cultural Theology:

The cultural theology module introduced me to ideas and thinkers with which I had not been familiar and offered an opportunity to think more systematically about the nature of late modernity and the particular challenges for Christian life within it. In counterpoint to ideas of liquid modernity from Bauman (2000) and Ward (2002), I began to explore more fully the work of Hauerwas (1983 and 1989) and the narrative theology of Walker (1996). This led to an essay on the title: “Theology is Necessarily Cultural”. Significant themes from this essay

have led towards the present thesis – a concern with how faith is contextualised within secular modernity and the significance of narrative for the Christian faith.

Biblical Studies:

This short module provided an opportunity to engage with recent developments in Biblical scholarship and was significant in gaining a grasp of the range of current theological thinking. There was, however, no direct link between this module and the theme or content of the thesis.

Church History – Clerical Identities and Activities:

The Church History module focussed on understanding developing clerical identities through the Reformation period. Although the Church History module did not result in an substantive written work for assessment this proved useful in pointing towards the importance of a narrative of professionalization when writing about university chaplaincy. Historical methodology also provided further grounding in ways of reading texts which have proved useful in the documentary analysis which forms a significant part of the thesis.

Moral Theology and Professional Ethics:

An essay on professional ethics and ministry proved a fruitful stimulus to thought about the nature of ministry and how it relates to the prevailing professionalism of the university context. Comparing and contrasting the thin accounts of professional ethics generally with more richly textured theological models based in covenant rather than contract proved to be

particularly relevant to my situation in ministry. As an ordained minister employed as a chaplain by the secular university I became more focused on the importance of providing a clearly theological account of my work and presence in contrast to a simple translation of that ministry into the professional categories of the organisation. A need to reflect further on these issues and a recognition of their wider implications became important building blocks for the thesis and also had direct practical implications for the practice of chaplaincy.

Year 2

Political Dimension of Public Ministry:

This course proved pivotal in deciding the theme of the Research Based Thesis. It introduced me to the work of John Rawls (1996, 1999) and his understanding of political liberalism and public reason arguments. This led to an essay contrasting Rawlsian style political liberalism with theological accounts of Christianity in the public square – in particular, Roman Catholic social teaching on the Common Good. The account of the public space offered by the traditions of political liberalism with its concerns for a public “neutrality” in religion and its anxiety about conflictual faith traditions became particularly important for the work of chaplaincy in the university where there were increasing concerns about violent extremism in the name of Islam. Policy documents on violent extremism which were then being received by universities seemed at a first reading to present a modified and changing form of the secular liberal account which I became interested in investigating further. It became clear that what was happening in HE at the time was representative of a wider shift in the position of religion within public life and that chaplaincy in the secular HEI might therefore make an interesting case study in this developing relationship. Whilst looking more closely at the theology of the Common Good seemed to provide an alternative theological account which supported a positive engagement within the public square this argument on its own seemed

to me insufficient. All of these concerns became recurring themes for further investigation in the thesis.

Spirituality:

A module on spirituality included elements on Job and wisdom literature. Whilst this module did not contribute directly to the thesis, it did suggest the significance of wisdom in Christian spirituality. Chaplaincy as an expression of engaged Christian wisdom in conversation with the dominant epistemology of detached knowledge in the post-Enlightenment university is one of the main themes of the thesis. Although not explored in the spirituality module, David Ford's (2007) theology of wisdom draws heavily on wisdom literature especially Job, and relates these themes to the knowledges of the university.

Education:

The theology of knowledge and Christian understandings of education are essential to this thesis. The education module introduced themes of Christian Paideia, reflection on the distinctive nature of Christian education, and in particular the relationship between education and formation. As a minister working full time within an educational institution and with a long history of involvement with schools, especially through governance, the module had direct relevance to my work but also provided important background material which was to help shape the thesis. The module helped me to realise that a contextual theology for the ministry of university chaplaincy must also be a theology of education and that the chaplaincy had to find a form of mission and presence which somehow presented a Christian alternative to the dominant narratives of the secular university.

Sociology of Religion and the Contemporary Religious Context:

At the time of this module my work as a university chaplain was becoming increasingly affected by concerns over violent extremism on campus. The opportunity to look briefly but systematically into sociological accounts of religion – and especially of minority religious groups proved useful both professionally and academically. An essay: “What are the Similarities and Differences in Public Reactions to NRMS in the 1970s-1990s and Current Reactions to New Islamic Movements?” allowed me to explore some of the discourses which were then forming around new Islamic movements arguing that these discourses were parallel to and shaped by early accounts of New Religious Movements. The methodologies to which this module pointed gave me the necessary tools to make a systematic analysis of the increasing body of policy documents relating to radicalisation and violent extremism on campus. These methods provided a major building block towards the thesis which combines analysis of the context through policy documents with theological reflection on mission and ministry within that context.

Research Methodologies:

The final module of the second year was concerned with research Methodologies in preparation for the empirical research to be undertaken in Ministerial Focused Study of Year 3. Further work on methodology was undertaken with a specialist course on textual analysis in preparation for the thesis.

Year 3

Ministerial Focused Study:

Increasing interest in issues of diversity, widening participation and religious identities within the university led me to a study entitled: “Religion, Social Capital and Higher Education Students: a study of the effects of religious identity on the experience of a group of students at a U.K. University”. A series of semi-structured interviews were recorded with members of a Black Pentecostal student Christian group in a London University. The group were particularly interesting to study as many of their members had engaged with the public life of the university by holding office in the Students’ Union. The study asked in what ways membership of the group and previous membership of a Church acted as social capital in enabling three significant transitions: arrival at university, engagement with the university, moving on from university. The initial hypothesis had been that religious identity was acting as social capital and facilitating all these transitions. This proved not to be the case with the majority of student not having had significant involvement with a church prior to arrival at university and only joining or becoming active in the society towards the end of their first year. Membership of the group had a significant impact on transition out of the university and on a transition to engagement with the university including a renewed commitment to study. Conclusions from the study were focused on the nature of student support and of induction programmes with recommendations that for a significant number of students the real point of transition into student life comes much later than is commonly assumed.

As well as providing a much needed introduction to and experience of empirical research this study helped to focus my thoughts on how to design a research programme for a thesis which was directly related to my context in ministry. The themes of diversity, of faith groups and their differing ways of engagement with the public life of the university and of the life of Christian community within the university were all carried forward strongly into the thesis. The study, however, had another significant impact which helped to support the Research

Based Thesis – a number of sociologists and student experience managers at the university where I worked were interested in the study as it related to their academic interests and to the developing concerns in the sector about the student experience. The work done in the Ministerial Focused Study with its introduction to more empirical and sociological methodologies gave me access to parts of the research community in my own university. This was an important learning experience and impacted on the thesis not just through the indirect support it provided but through a more direct understanding of the importance of the sociability of scholarship.

Conclusion:

There has been little which was covered in this DMin programme which has not fed into this culmination in the Research Basis Thesis for me. I have been able to draw on prior learning in the programme and return to core texts and themes introduced there. The programme has proved to have an integrity for the themes which I wanted to develop and has considerably enhanced my ministry in its context enabling me to engage in and contribute to much wider conversation within the Church about the nature of chaplaincy and education.